20 August 1976 25p USA & Canada $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

Glyn Jones: The Open-Door University
Michael Holroyd: The Author as Victim
A. J. P. Taylor on Tom Driberg
Kingsley Amis: Words and Meanings
Alexander Cockburn: The Republican Choice
Wilfred Beckerman on Happiness and Economics
Mervyn Jones Lorna Sage Frank Kermode
John Coleman on Scorsese's 'Taxi Driver'

Ambassador College
OCT 5 1976
LIBRARY

Five More Months?

'Four more years' the Nixon-Agnew supporters chanted gloatingly as the last Republican convention came to an end in Miami Beach. They did not, of course, get them: Agnew survived for just over a year and Nixon for rather less than two. This year in Kansas City the Republican Party has, quite properly, shown rather more diffidence. President Ford has made it clear that he not only recognises himself as the underdog but positively welcomes the role. He is right to do so, for the strongest card he holds in an otherwise wretchedly weak hand lies in the universal assumption that he enters the election as a fore-ordained loser.

There are powerful reasons why that assumption should be made. The very fact that Gerald Ford, as a President-in-office, has had to fight so hard to convince his own party that he was the right candidate for it to nominate provides its own commentary on the confidence he has inspired in the nation at large. It was, no doubt, too much to expect him in two short years to cover himself in glory; but he has failed to measure up to a far more modest test – even his most devoted admirers could scarcely claim that he has 'not put a foot wrong'. Indeed, his bungling clumsiness has become something of a byword, politically as well as physically. From his brazen pardoning of former President Nixon in his second month of office to the equally insensitive handling of his cabinet reshuffle last November, most of his public actions have simply served to confirm the gibes that Lyndon Johnson used so sedulously to spread about him.

Yet Ford himself is not the issue. What the American voter will have to decide on 2 November is whether a party that, almost four years ago, renewed its mandate with the electorate on a prospectus of fraud, perjury and larceny has sufficiently redeemed its record to be re-elected for a third term. Already Watergate shows signs of being regarded as part of show-business rather than politics. Just as all that is left of the Kennedy years is Richard Burton mouthing a song in *Camelot*, so the main reminder of the Nixon era threatens to become a couple of clean-cut young actors personifying righteousness and truth in a movie. It may be reassuringly romantic but it hardly amounts to a realistic basis on which a democratic electorate should settle its account with those who betray its trust.

Even if there were no other arguments, the squalid record of the Republican Party in office would in itself argue strongly for a change of Administration in Washington next January. Of course not everyone who served him was tainted with Nixon's own guilt. It is difficult to believe that his Administration did not have its fair share of 'good' Germans as well as bad ones (and in some cases, like Dr Kissinger's, the implicit distinction between silence and complicity is even now by no means easy to draw). But there are, in fact, additional reasons for believing that the world's interest, as well as America's, would be best served by a Democratic victory next November. The Republican Party has never been exactly fecund with ideas – and most of those that it carries with it in its ideological baggage have traditionally been negative. In the years since 1968 it has largely dismantled Lyndon Johnson's 'Great Society', it has reversed the moves previously made towards a more egalitarian economic system and it has not so much failed as declined to meet the challenge of poverty in the midst of affluence.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the Democratic Party under Jimmy Carter will share the outlook or the aspirations of the Democratic Party under Roosevelt, or even LBJ. Any change in the Administration in Washington next January may well prove to be more one of personnel than of policies. But there is something to be said even for that: President Ford has increasingly appeared these past two years to be all too apt a symbol of the competence and capability of his own government. In retrospect he would certainly have been wise to stick to his original intention merely to serve out the remainder of President Nixon's term and not to seek election in his own right. Having changed his mind on that, he can hardly complain if the American people now take the decision for him.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spotlight on Politics

Christopher Hitchens

Educating Our Masters

The Tory Party's problem with education has often been a matter of the tone of voice in which it talks about it. Mrs Thatcher's term as the relevant minister was marred by her brittle, schoolmarmish accent; Mr Norman St John-Stevas recently began a visit to an inner-city comprehensive school by asking fruitily what provision was made for the classics. Advisers are working at this very moment on Mrs Thatcher's voice. (It is, as she says, very difficult to change. 'I've spoken with this voice for the last 25 years,' she recently complained). There is, however, one man who has no such problems with the plain tongue and the popular approach. When he is billed to speak in the Commons, Mrs Thatcher will always leave her office and go to listen. On educational matters there is no doubt that the party's most sought-after speaker is Dr Rhodes Boyson. An ex-socialist from an ILP background, a Lancastrian, a former head of a large London comprehensive, Boyson fits Disraeli's description of the 'angel in marble' working-class Tory.

If 'progressivism' in education is on the defensive at the moment – which it clearly is – then Boyson with his Black Papers and pungent articles is the man who can claim the largest single credit (or voucher). On 21 July, unremarked by most political correspondents (wake up, Fenton), his motion for a voucher experiment in education drew a three-line whip from the Conservative Party, with even Edward Heath voting for it. There is an excellent chance that some commitment to vouchers will form part of the next Conservative manifesto.

Education has several advantages as an issue for the Tories. First, and most obviously, it rallies their traditional middle-class supporters, and appeals to many uncommitted voters worried about the state of the schools. Second, by the emphasis they put on 'choice', Tory spokesmen can simultaneously appeal to the ideas of 'freedom' and the old notions of discipline and parental control.

Surveying Conservative attitudes in a recent article, Peregrine Worsthorne confessed that he did not altogether care for the continual stress placed on 'liberty'. The problem as he saw it was not too much state control but too little. Britain was threatened not by grey dictatorship but by bloody anarchy. That strain in Tory propaganda can be assimilated easily enough by the Boysons, who attack the socialist approach to education not just for its egalitarianism ('levelling') but also because it contains the deadly idea that human nature can be improved. They simply do not believe that the Rousseau-derived idea of the progressives can be applied in concrete cities. Needless to add, William Tyndale School was a gift for them. They want to be seen as the party of standards and scholarship, but, moreover, as the party which does not believe that man is wiser than the market.

Thus, questioned about how voucher systems would work and what would be the best way to run a school, they reply that 'the people must decide'. A parent with his voucher will impose the consumer sovereignty over education that Tories believe to apply in the market place. After that, it is up to the market to allocate and up to the state to wither away. This is either a brave affirmation of popular power or an abdication of responsibility, depending on where you take your original stand. Certainly it avoids awkward questions – such as what happens if you award equal vouchers for unequal products in different regions, districts and neighbourhoods. There are other inconsistencies as well, of which the contrast between politicians who say 'leave it to the people' when it comes to educational advantage and 'call the cops' when it comes to almost anything else is only one. Dr Boyson certainly does not stand against state power when it comes to capital or corporal punishment, soft dope or immigration control.

Indeed, very few of the new Right seem capable of seeing that another of their cherished policies – that of a sharp and swift fall in the level of public expenditure – make it *inevitable* that some children would go to sink schools and that such schools would be driven into the wilderness by an application of a voucher system. Racial ghettoisation would intensify. Standards just would not come into it.

Headmasters and other teachers, however, would. They would become the effective arbiters of policy, as well as part-time auctioneers. This would be an odd result for the Boyson school to achieve, since there is a very noticeable animus against teachers in general in their writings and speeches. *The Conservative Opportunity* (Macmillan £7.95), edited by Lord Blake and John Patten and devoted to the themes of the current counter-revolution, contains an essay on education by Vernon Bogdanor which sets out the dichotomy between

> On the one side of the divide . . . the new educational establishment – administrators both local and national, leaders of the teachers' unions (though not, it should be noted, most of their members), educational journalists and progressive politicians. On the other side of the divide stood parents, doubtful and confused.

And later, '"parent power", far from being a middle-class slogan, is one that unites the classes against the educational establishment'. Certainly, in Tameside, the Tories suspect that Conservative teachers voted Labour in order to get their extra allowances, and some working-class Labour voters voted Tory in order to get what one of them called on BBC television 'an education for my children'. Labour would be stupid to ignore the potential of parent power, whether it is expressed through voucher experiments in middle-class Kent, or urban voters demanding the strengthening of Sections 68 and 76 of the 1944 Education Act, which give parents the notional right to choose, and to appeal.

The question of selection is also likely to become more and more vexed. Boyson believes that Tory policy will consist of vouchers, stronger monitoring of standards by exams and inspectors, more investigation and publication of results, and power for local authorities to decide whether they keep comprehensives, grammar schools or *return to selectivity*. Others, like Bogdanor, propose selection at 14 as a possibility. All factions are agreed that there must be much more free trade where exam results are concerned – when the Inner London Education Authority refuses to publish them they do arouse the suspicion that the results don't reflect credit. (Not that public schools are exactly forward in publishing their own figures.)

The problem is that the comprehensive principle appears to be such natural commonsense (imagine a debate 100 years ago between those who believed in universal literacy and those who said one should concentrate on the bright ones who could be taught to read: let alone the then arguments about compulsory education being tyranny) that its deficiencies have been written off as either teething troubles or reactionary quibbles. There are, of course, plenty of both. So, also, are there plenty of Tories who see the present stampede to the Right as electoral death, if not worse. But the fact remains that it is Labour rather than the Tories who now want to 'keep education out of politics' – a sure sign of being rattled.

As in Sir Keith Joseph's 'theories', there is a contradiction between market allocation and fair provision of resources. It is hard to think of any commodity with a less elastic supply than school facilities. The relationship between supply and demand in that sector is almost completely fractured. Unless, of course, you have money to 'top up' your voucher or even by-pass the whole shooting match and send your children to fee-paying establishments. It may or may not have been said before, but with Tory educational populism the proof of the pudding still lies in the Eton.

NEW STATESMAN
Vol 92 No 2370
Published weekly at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ Tel: 01-405 8471
© 1976
The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Annual Subscription Rates

By surface mail	UK £12.50 Overseas £14 USA $30
By air mail	Europe £17.50 Middle East £19 Africa, India £20 USA, Canada $40 Australia, NZ, Far East £21

For details of student rates write to the Subscriptions Supervisor at the above address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Alexander Cockburn

Kansas City Blues

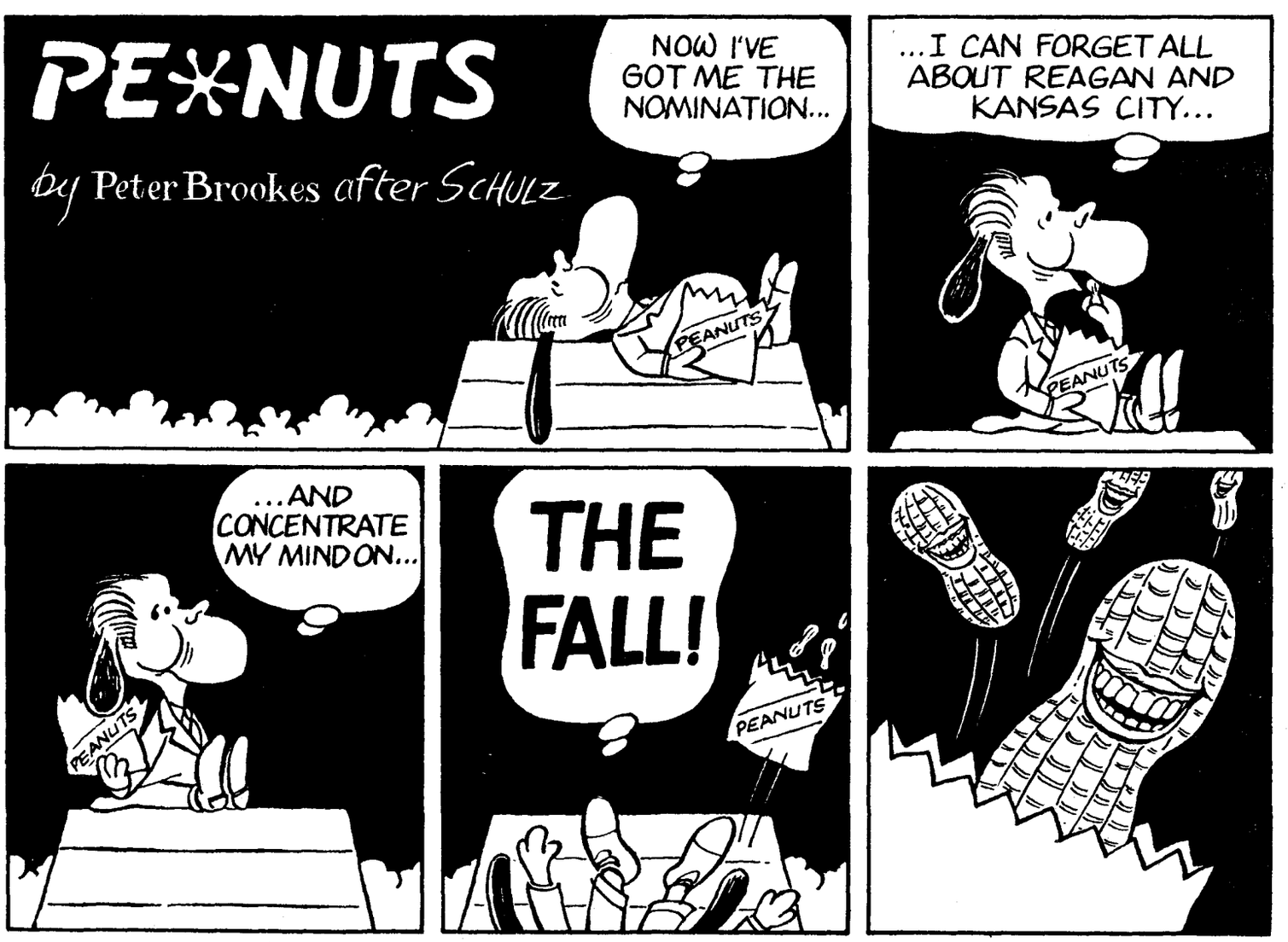
Prolonged contact with Republicans, particularly the prosperous small businessmen who appear to have constituted the majority of delegates in Kansas City, is normally a depressing experience. At least I find it so, in the sense that the steady enunciation of beliefs one finds mistaken, ridiculous or cruel is first of all annoying and ultimately exhausting. But maybe because Kansas City is a pleasant place, maybe as a contrast to the tenseless rituals of the Democratic convention in Madison Square Garden a month ago, the proceedings here have not been without allure. There have been some specifically delightful moments. John Connally, for example, suffered through a boisterous press conference trying to explain a taped conversation with Nixon. The tape seemed to have him promising Nixon 'an adequate allocation of oil in Texas'. Not so, said Connally. What he had actually been talking about was an 'adequate allocation of all the taxes'. It had simply been a blameless chat about revenue sharing. You can't keep Big John down. Shortly afterwards I encountered a man distributing a printed speech. Since the speech began 'My fellow Americans, I come before you tonight as a candidate for the vice-presidency and as a man whose honesty and integrity have been questioned . . .' I assumed him to be Connally's press aide, distributing further efforts at self-exculpation and self-promotion. The man turned out to be an entrepreneur from New York, promoting his recently produced record of Nixon's 'Checkers' speech.

Not so far away from this character was the rounded figure of Elizabeth Ray, the woman who brought down Wayne Hays. She was covering the convention for a skin magazine called *Genesis*. Reporters clustered about her. 'Ms Ray' cried one rich voice, 'has your experience with Wayne Hays turned you against the Democrats?' From this charming interview one could turn to the spectacle of John Dean, Nemesis for Republicans generally, covering the convention for *Rolling Stone* magazine. He assured me solemnly he was getting 'good access'. At least no Republican seemed to have knocked this Judas down. All of which sights led one to confront the main proceedings with genial anticipation.

Wedged between a traumatic past and an ominous future, it is in the nature of most people to wish to make a tolerable job of the present. Such appeared to be the ambition of the Republican convention. The atmosphere has not been savage: the debates not so much ferocious as sedate. I write before the final roll call but even on Tuesday night, with the triumph of President Ford seemingly assured, the rancour of the defeated seemed well under control. It is not, after all, as though either section of the almost equally divided delegates saw cherished beliefs being swept aside. President Ford was prepared to give Ronald Reagan almost everything but the nomination itself – and perhaps the mood of relative calm could be explained by the fact that most people realise that even that gift may not be worth much.

Republican pessimism cannot have been much assuaged by three of the main speakers on the opening night of the proceedings. First came Nelson Rockefeller, forthrightly confessing that his own vain search for the nomination was at an end after 16 years. He was followed by Barry Goldwater, who led the Republicans to catastrophe in 1964. On his heels came Alf Landon who performed a similar service in 1936. Scarcely a trio emblematic of victory. Finally, in a convention hall unadorned by a single picture of past leaders, senator Howard Baker came to the rostrum to make the keynote speech.

'These have been difficult years for the Republican Party,' he almost immediately



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confessed. 'The Watergate era was a painful time for us.' At least Baker got the word out, even though Ford's speech-writers trimmed the amount of time he gave to the subject. Virtually no other speaker mentioned Watergate and in a hall filled with delegates who presumably voted for him in both 1968 and 1972 the name of Richard Nixon was not heard. No party, excepting the token efforts of Baker, can excise eight years and hope to stride forward boldly in this amputated condition.

At least, over the last eight months, it seemed to many Republicans that Ronald Reagan offered some form of escape from historical nightmares. From the days of his early speeches in New Hampshire he boldly set the terms of the election debate. They were evidently the terms of extreme conservatism uncontaminated by reality or the day-to-day exigencies of his own party and President ensconced in the White House. By the time of this convention he was able to write a letter of congratulation to members of the Republican Platform Committee praising them for their efforts. 'You have succeeded,' he said (referring to national defence, the fight against crime, forced bussing, abortion, welfare reform, gun control, foreign policy, inflation and the like), 'in all these areas, in writing planks of which you can be proud.'

But why, given the fact that the party has accepted Reaganite rhetoric, has it apparently rejected his person? Reagan issued no pardon to Nixon. Reagan cannot be indicted as a member of what Jimmy Carter now likes to call the Nixon-Ford Administration, cannot be directly associated with the two recessions over which that Administration has presided. It is as though the Republican Party has not even the vigour to confront suicide or glory in the robust fashion organised by the forces of Barry Goldwater – that the tarnished yet somewhat comfortable incumbent aura of President Ford is just barely preferable.

It is not as if liberal Republicans, a disorganised and withered crew, enjoyed spectacular triumphs at the convention. Eroded on one side by Jimmy Carter's ideological ecumenism and on the other by clearly enunciated, if aberrant, beliefs, they were almost silent, with the exception of hard-fought battles conducted by Republican women on matters of abortion and the Equal Rights amendment.

Of course of all people it was Reagan who felt compelled to try to bridge the gap between the two wings of the party by plucking up Senator Schweiker as his running mate. Like many of his operations – or rather those of his pleasant manager, John Sears – it was a creative effort, but really one just too much outside the common, though mistaken, perceptions of Reagan's political character.

The crucial battle on Tuesday night involved an attempt by Reagan's forces to force Ford to state who his running mate would be. Such a declaration, so Sears calculated, might have shaken loose some outraged delegates and deposited them in Reagan's camp. Ford's forces beat off the attempt and the victory seemed to reveal a feeling by the delegates that, if all that Reagan's overt expediency could produce was Schweiker, then Ford might as well be allowed the traditionally covert expediency of not revealing his hand.

Intra-party battles as close as the one just terminated in Kansas City normally produce clarification of position, definitions of posture. Yet because Ford and Reagan are in so many ways so remarkably similar – because Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater were, this time around, on the same side of the fence – the struggle has in the end amounted to little more than the apportionment of platitudes entirely divorced from the present problems of either the country or of the 20 per cent or so of the voters who presently register as Republicans. 'The time has come,' said Connally in a flaccid speech, 'for the Republican Party to lead the fight for a constitutional amendment to prohibit deficit spending except in time of war or national emergency.' If that is the best that Republicans can come up with after eight months, Jimmy Carter – given the size of the deficits under President Ford – should have no problem. Reagan at least offered the politics of the conservative imagination. Ford does not have that advantage.

Kansas City

Bruce Palling

Rhodesia Waits for the Crunch

Perhaps it was simply a coincidence, but news reports of last month's grenade explosions in Salisbury's La Bohème strip joint and the Pink Panther restaurant appeared on the same day that the post office circulated an attractive new set of postage stamps highlighting endangered species of Rhodesian wildlife. Only one person suffered serious injuries but the resident stripper, Zilla, had her car blown up. Rewards were announced, and *Time* magazine called it a 'major terrorist attack'. Such fears were not held by some Salisbury party-goers, who insisted the whole episode was just the result of some of the boys back from the front 'letting off a bit of steam'. Adding hope to this bizarre explanation was the later police report that no, this was not the work of terrorists after all.

Instead, eight officials from the Muzorewa faction of the African National Council appeared in court wearing identical blue boiler suits to plead guilty to six counts under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act of committing acts of terrorism and sabotage – a charge which carries the strong likelihood of the death sentence. Despite the defendants' admission that they had travelled into the scrublands in the north east, where they were handed an assorted number of Chinese stick grenades and explosives by black guerrillas, the Government would like to absolve them of any blame so that the security forces can show that the terrorists owe allegiance to nobody save themselves and acknowledge no black Rhodesian political leadership.

Of course, since then the Rhodesian raid into neighbouring Mozambique, in which at least 340 (the Mozambiquens say 618) Africans died, has captured white imagination, leading one newspaper to claim that it was 'reminiscent of the lead given to the world by the Israelis at Entebbe'. This is a difficult analogy to follow as one would be hard put to prove that the commandos entered Mozambique with the idea of rescuing the black Rhodesian guerrillas.

The raid has bolstered morale although the Mozambiquens may have more in mind for retaliation than the cursory rocketing and mortar attack on the outskirts of Umtali recently in which no one was killed and a 1929 Dodge was damaged by shrapnel. On my first visit to Umtali a fortnight before the trouble began, it was uneventful in the extreme save for the ageing Portuguese police officer who tailed me all around the town after I paid a quick visit to the Mozambique border post, where the Rhodesian sign states: 'We hope you have enjoyed your stay.' Since Mozambique closed the rail and road border last March the towns have become a shade more apprehensive. Surrounded by an impressive range of mountains, with only one road out, they naturally feel vulnerable to attack. According to some reports 300 houses among the European community of 10,000 are up for rent.

The tension in Umtali after the attack was measurably higher and, next to Frelimo mortar squads, the most hated group were the press. One truckload of commandos gave a reverse of the V-for-victory sign while the hapless owner of the damaged classic car collection put his Alsatians on to any correspondent who knocked on his door. The attack came on the eve of the annual Umtali agricultural show, complete with the black prison group's brass band

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and prompted several hundred girls from the all-white high school to march down the main street singing 'Rhodesians never die' and sporting signs saying: 'We shall not be moved' and 'Rhodesia is super'.

South of Umtali, through a remote belt of tribal trust lands, is one of the largest infiltration routes of the guerrillas from neighbouring Mozambique. It is in small farming towns such as Chipinga that the apartheid starts to show through. After I had booked a double room for myself and my interpreter, a black graduate from the University of Rhodesia, the manager rushed in to explain that he didn't care if that fellow was a senator-chief, he would have to stay in the servants' quarters. Yet the sharp edges of petty discrimination have been removed in a handful of Salisbury hotels, although 'right of admission reserved' signs still proliferate throughout the country. One incident recently points to a welcome change in the attitude of the Rhodesian police force – still known as the British South Africa Police. A black Rhodesian journalist was turning on to the main road one evening when another car slammed straight into him. The police promptly charged the other driver – a drunk air force officer still in uniform, who had been celebrating his first day back from the operational zone. 'Six years ago, whenever the police stopped me it was "boy" but this time they actually called me mister and drove me to the nearest hospital,' the puzzled reporter said.

The recent raid into Mozambique by the security forces came hot on the heels of the security forces' largest loss in a single operation, with five territorial soldiers killed in a mortar attack and the subsequent hot pursuit operation. Accordingly, while foreign ministers in Western capitals sense the danger of the conflict escalating, Ian Smith's government sees all the more reason to refuse talks for the hand-over of the country to a coalition and eventual majority rule.

The chief security spokesman admits that there are 4,000 guerrillas, on top of the 1,000 or so already trained, who will be ready for action along the Mozambique border by the end of next month, but there is no sign of the present Government suing for peace unless events on the ground deteriorate considerably – and even that would not be a guarantee for talks. Already the security forces are stretched throughout the entire country and the civilian work force is subject to increasing short call-ups.

The Government is bracing itself both for increased action in the coming weeks and the feared invasion by the 'Rucksack Brigade' – a vast army of hungry freelance journalists, old Vietnam hands, who Special Branch police think are now all heading for Rhodesia. So far, the only appearance has been a freelance journalist from the briefcase brigade. Last week the following advertisement appeared in the columns of the *Rhodesia Herald*:.

> Lost: Fifty dollars reward – a brown leatherette briefcase, missing on Thursday night, containing two passports, 3,000 Dutch guilders, address books, air ticket, documents and black leather wallet initialled R.R.C. If found, please contact Lord Richard Cecil, Meikle's Hotel.
>
> *Salisbury*

Michael Holroyd*

The Author as Victim

'This is a complex problem and cannot be solved overnight' – Miss Margaret Jackson's bewildered cry during the Second Reading of the Public Lending Right Bill on 26 May sounded oddly as it reached the visitors' gallery of the House of Commons. The authors up there that night had been under the impression that such problems had already been solved by the Government's Technical Investigation Group and that their PLR campaign was just then entering its 26th year.

At the beginning of this year these authors had taken a page of the *Bookseller* to make a statement. With patient clarity they went over many of the PLR principles that have been repeated again and again, and that, like some marvellous conjuring performance, always seem to take everyone by surprise. PLR, they reminded us, was a payment for service, not an award for merit (the job of the Arts Council) or a subsidy to alleviate distress (the job of the Royal Literary Fund); borrowing from libraries would continue to be free and the money would come from central government funds, not local rates; the scheme would be operated by a system of loan-sampling and, though capable of being extended later, would begin with books (by single authors) in public libraries. They explained how it was to be given effect, how it would be implemented, how it should work, how much it cost and how fair it would be to all copyright owners, to libraries and to the public. 'We feel that it is very important now,' they wrote, '[that] . . . Members of Parliament should understand clearly what the present position is.'

For all that some MPs have understood, PLR might have been poor law reform. They do not understand the present and they have not understood the past. They neither understand us nor, to judge from the quality of their debates, do they understand themselves. Misunderstanding is their strength, and it is against this, reinforced by massive indifference, that so many of us have been struggling these last 25 years.

In March 1974 the Government set up a Technical Investigation Group to examine the practical and cost implications of PLR. An account of its investigations was published in March 1975. Another year passed and in March 1976 a final report appeared. This revealed that the longer you wait to set up the scheme, the more it will cost: in other words, it confirmed that there is inflation in the country. Both reports endorsed the conclusions that the Society of Authors and the Writers Action Group had given the Department of Education and Science as early as 1973. These conclusions, which were not believed, were that a loan-based system was practical, no more expensive and far more equitable than other systems of operation.

As a member of the Technical Investigation Group that produced the main report, I believed we had achieved a famous victory. No one would ever be able to speak such nonsense about the subject again. After the two House of Commons debates I now know I was wrong.

Little could have been picked up from press reports of the very curious passage of the PLR Bill. On 18 March, towards the end of the day's business in the Lords, Lord Strabolgi took everyone by surprise when he suddenly moved the First Reading. The Bill was published the next day and the Second Reading followed questions about non-returnable bottles and a mental hospital on 5 April. This debate, together with the Committee and Report stages (27 April and 11 May), was extremely useful. The Bill, which was weak in several respects, left the House in a much-improved state, due in particular to important amendments carried against the Government by Lord Willis.

These debates were encouraging because they showed the number of noble lords who had taken the trouble to study the subject and who realised that the purpose of the Bill was, in the words of Lord Gibson, 'to bring, or to go some way to bringing, the remuneration of a profession more into relation with the extent to which books written by the members of that profession are read by the reading public'.

From the frustrations of the past I had evolved Holroyd's Law, which states that the rate at which anything gets done depends upon the opposition you can summon against it. Without the oxygen of controversy, things wither. Our trouble had been that we were paid less in money than in praise (some of it frankly back-handed). Both Houses of Parliament were behind us; the parties had committed themselves at the election; PLR had been enshrined more than once in the Queen's Speech; the front benches solidly supported it: and we languished. The reason why the Lords debates were generally so sensible was that most speeches against the Bill came from its supporters. We had summoned up the sort of opposition that actually led somewhere. But the trouble was the lack of money. Lord Elton likened the Bill to Winnie the Pooh's birthday present to Eeyore: 'There is no honey in the honey jar – it is just a useful pot to put things in.' That authors were not so pleased as Eeyore had been was made clear by Lord Goodman. He calculated that an author might hope to get 'some sum approaching a fiver a year as a result of the benevolence and munificence of this Bill'.

With such speakers as Lord Eccles and Lady Lee on hand, it would be unfair to suggest that there was no comedy. But both

Michael Holroyd was chairman of the Society of Authors 1973-4 and is now chairman of the National Book League.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these old comedians were played off the stage by Lord Paget. Just as Satan gets the best tunes, so the idiot is given the wittiest lines. Lord Paget's *obiter dicta* were inspired. PLR, he exclaimed, if it were not to subsidise pornography, would have to be part of a private censorship. He then moved confidently on to Shakespeare: 'I should think it extremely doubtful as to whether Shakespeare was a professional author.' The reason for this was 'that the worst writing in this and every age comes from professional writers'. On the subject of libraries, he felt that 'if authors do not want to sell to public libraries, they do not have to do so'. The Bill was 'an insult to Parliament'.

Lord Paget's speech would have fitted better into the House of Commons alongside the performances of Messrs English, Moate and Sproat. The Second Reading of the Bill was introduced there at six hours' notice on the night of 26 May. The only reason for its appearance was apparently an error made in respect of the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Bill. To discover much sense that night, or on the night of 5 July when the debate was resumed, was about as easy as finding birds of paradise in a henhouse. No progress was made, chiefly because the opposition was so inept. Much time was wasted with the wrangling of two ex-Ministers for the Arts as to which one deserved the greater glory. Brigid Brophy's face seemed to darken after this, and certainly I could hear little in these competitive claims that squared with my own dealings with these ministers. I felt a pang of pity for Mr Arthur Blenkinsop who, though 'concerned to try to help artistes', confessed himself to be in a 'deeper state of doubt' at the end of the first adjourned debate than at the beginning. It was left to Mr Hugh Jenkins to inject some heroic optimism into the affair. 'The Bill will bring credit to the House,' he thundered, adding somewhat desperately: 'Goodness knows, after the goings-on in recent days, the House needs a bit of credit of this kind.'

No such claim was made on 5 July. That night Mr Michael Engish described PLR as a plot 'to pay taxpayers' money to authors of books that no individual wants to buy'. It was, he decided, a 'middle-class subsidy', in which context he was prepared to discuss his own origins, which might make a suitable background for a book (no laughter). The first priority of the DES 'ought to be to educate people to read books'. Nevertheless, 'at this hour of the night', he would have preferred talking about children and mothers. If he had to say something about PLR (and he spoke for a very long time without saying anything), it was that the House should 'consider this principle . . . when there are no other priorities'. In other words, let's wait another quarter of a century.

A more alarmist sound came from Mr Roger Moate. The country, he warned, 'could be on the road to massive public spending on this exercise'. The actual sum of money set aside, as Mr Clement Freud had pointed out, was less than twice as much as the House of Commons lost annually on catering, but said Mr Moate 'if that is all they [authors] earn it may be all they deserve'. Whether the money was too much or too little hardly mattered because he had been able to find out that neither the general public nor the authors themselves wanted PLR, so 'we shall be doing our job if we do not give the Bill a Second Reading'. Once it was disposed of for ever 'we can say honour is satisfied. Both sides will have paid their tributes to the authors and we can forget about this odd legislation'.

This sort of stuff can too easily reduce one to spluttering vituperation. But it is sad to see Mr Iain Sproat, an author *manqúe* if ever there was one, entering their ranks. So far in the debates, and to the delight of Mr English, he has restricted himself to the subject of Child Benefits, adding casually that 'I happen to be opposed to the Bill'. This was a curious throw-away line, not least because, on drawing a high place in the Private Members' list some time back, he asked to be allowed to introduce PLR. Unfortunately (since we had someone still more highly placed) we had to turn him down and, following other rejections, he is now asking for what would have been a repeal of his own law. But he does not lack courage of this sort. His gift is for endless plausibility. In literary affairs he has many credentials and has been the publisher of a now defunct enterprise. When he comes to declare his interest I hope he will not be so modest as he is in *Who's Who*, where he makes no mention of those distinguished works, such as *The Debunkside Cabinet Book*, he writes under his pseudonyms of Richard Penn and Richard Fountain.

If the Tory Party does not discipline its back-benchers it is from such a person that future opposition may come. The danger of such opposition is its triviality. If the entire Tory Party were against PLR the Government could slap on a three-line whip and we should be there. As it is, with just a few Moates and Sproats against them, all they can manage is a thin one-line whip.

It is unusual, perhaps unique, for an important Bill to be twice removed from the floor of the House after three hours of debate. The hope now is that it will go through its remaining stages in the 'hangover' period before the opening of the new session on 21 November when uncompleted Bills die. The third attempt to complete the Second Reading is to take place on 14 October. All responsible Labour MPs who believe that the party has a duty to answer its past engagement, and who care something for the writers of this country, will want to stiffen Mr Michael Foot's resolve to get this belated legislation on the statute book.

David Leitch

August Is a Wicked Month

From 'The Monster of Troyes' to 'A New Bluebeard in the Suburbs' it has been murder, murder all the way recently. So much so that this week's Paris bank raid, perhaps the biggest ever, has come almost as light relief. It is always hard to tell whether France becomes spectacularly more criminal in wicked August or, to take the easy way out, whether simply to blame it all on the press. Certainly politics are in limbo for *les vacances*. Just as certainly the column inches normally devoted to grave affairs of state are now filled with sensational crime, proffered by the papers much in the spirit of a pusher offering his clients methadone for a limited season during a heroin dearth. I personally suspect there is a serious crime wave in the offing, working on a quiet and indeed literally subterranean level, but the 'Métro muggings', for the moment anyway, have given way to *grand guignol*.

Thus, to begin with 'Bluebeard', the case of Bernard Pesquet, aged 54, called by the press – and, more cautiously, by the police too – 'one of the great criminals of the century'. The adjective refers to the scope of his operations, which may include as many as a dozen murders, rather than any imaginative innovations. Indeed, despite heroic efforts to glamorise him, including the headline link with the flamboyant Henri Landru who was guillotined in 1922, Pesquet remains resolutely ordinary.

He is almost a case study in the banality of evil, a grey withdrawn man from an equally monochrome suburb called Pierrelaye, a place like a punctuation mark north of Paris. Here, in the best tradition, the neighbours reported his family life as uneventful, his personal comportment as impeccably 'gentlemanly'. His wife Christine was 20 years younger than this hard-working painter and decorator. He received considerable neighbourly sympathy when she disappeared two years ago – it was generally assumed he had been ditched for a younger, more outgoing figure.

For Pesquet himself has the kind of inward-looking (and anguished) face one associates with ascetics, and it was only as the grisly story unfolded that an explanation for this evident suffering emerged. It was nothing to do with self-mortification. Rather he still bore the stigmata of incarceration, the legacy of a 20-year sentence he had served for a murder he had committed when still a teenager. Released in 1961, he had soon married, and his youthful crime had been totally forgotten until a fortnight ago. Then the police arrested him on suspicion of murdering a married couple and their maid in the (much ritzier) suburb of Neuilly.

It was at this stage the press got in on the act. They discovered his record and the fact that his wife had disappeared. More speculative than the police, they made what might seem an obvious connection, more vociferously it should be said as the days went by. Eventually the bodies of both the missing wife and another man, known to be a friend of the family, were discovered in Pesquet's cellar.

A further check among the house

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

painter's belongings produced a yet more sinister discovery – a full set of identification documents and other personal effects. These, it seems, relate to an entire family, still unnamed, who, in common with not a few other people in Pesquet's orbit, have apparently disappeared without trace.

No one yet knows how many murders this man has committed, or for what motive. Since last weekend he made a spirited attempt to kill himself, while being transferred from prison to magistrate's office, there is now an open season on guess-work, despite his own characteristic taciturnity. The true story, one suspects, should it ever emerge, will have a muted Simenon chill about it notably absent from the bloodthirsty fantasies the press is now disseminating.

The case of 'the Monster of Troyes' also has a strong element of press involvement. In this case 'the guilty man', a 21-year-old called Patrick Henry, has at least confessed to the murder of a young boy, Philippe Bertrand, in the course of an unsuccessful attempt to extract ransom money after a kidnapping. The matter at issue here is to do with the circumstances of the death and a conflict between Henry's confession and the autopsy evidence. In an attempt to elucidate the facts – and also, perhaps, to gain national publicity – the Troyes officials have been carrying out what they call a 'reconstitution'. That is, forcing the (extremely reluctant) murderer to return to the scene of the homicide, a room he had rented in a cheap hotel.

Monsieur Henry's chances of beating the guillotine have become a national guessing game – and, incidentally, diverted attention from a law and order issue with much wider general application. Pesquet and Henry are household names. Yet no one could identify a (now deceased) Métro security guard, one Claude Madigou, who last week killed a near-colleague – a uniformed policeman – in circumstances which, as the Métro organisation sadly insisted, are without precedent. Passengers summoned two uniformed police after Madigou, with revolver drawn, threatened some North African passengers on Trocadéro station because he suspected they had no tickets. When the police arrived Madigou fatally wounded one of them, and was in turn shot dead by the second policeman.

Ticket inspection was no part of Madigou's job – in fact he had been drinking and was simply bullying the North Africans. The rise of petty crime on the Métro has led to various types of armed security men, many (like Madigou) in plain clothes, being given a licence to stop anyone they wish.

In case this sounds trivial it is worth recording that in the last five weeks the police and similar groups claim to have made no fewer than 48,000 spot checks on the Underground. That 161 of these led to arrests, though how many will subsequently be chalked up as convictions remains unknown, is counted as a triumph for the security services. From 1 October, the Interior Minister Michel Poniatowski has promised that personnel working full-time on Métro checks will be more than doubled.

He, in fact, introduced this system in the first place, soon after coming to power in the summer of 1974, and at a time when mugging or petty theft on the capital's Underground system was virtually unknown. In the same spirit 'Ponia' also instituted spot checks on motorists, an initiative which in the first few days led to 100,000 drivers undergoing police interrogation and searches, again with no initial grounds for suspicion. This enormous undertaking involved some 10,000 police working overtime and led to under 50 convictions.

Some lawyers complained at the time that these measures were designed as a new step in the psychological, and also ideological apparatus of repression. For, tough as the French penal code is, no provision exists for arbitrary interrogation without grounds, still less for Madigou-style threats with a gun. The legal complaints were dismissed as 'Leftist' propaganda, but they have proved entirely justified. The mechanism of security checks is unexciting copy compared to tales of a new Bluebeard. But unobtrusively, and exactly as was feared, the notion that members of the public can be interrogated at any time without any excuse, that such procedures are in fact 'normal', has now been established. Nor can Poniatowski claim that his tough policy has reduced Métro crimes – just the reverse.

Paris

Matthew Blair

The Spectre of Trotsky

Thirty-six years ago today, an icepick smashed the skull of Leon Trotsky as he sat working at his desk in Mexico City. It has long been accepted that the chain of responsibility for the murder runs back to Joseph Stalin, and his Soviet heirs have been content to live with the inheritance – rewarding the assassin with Czech citizenship and a pension when he left prison via Castro's Cuba in 1960. This week in London, former associates of the Old Man have been meeting, and their behaviour gives some clue to the repeated failures of Trotsky's movement to develop beyond small groups and factions. Harold Robins, the guard at the villa who beat the assassin senseless before the police arrived, now accuses one of his fellow guards, still active as an American Trotskyist thinker and leader, of having been a conscious double agent for Stalinism since at least 1940. International commissions of inquiry are portentously called for, and some of the witnesses are accused of complicity in the assassination before the membership of the commission has even been announced. Sectarian accusations fly to and fro, with secret spies and agents detected or assumed to be everywhere. Vanessa Redgrave stumbles through a public speech in which she apologises for once having been a sponsor of the revisionist Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

Behind all the farce and bitterness is the appalling memory of what Isaac Deutscher called 'The Hell-Black Night', the midnight of the 20th century when there was actual collaboration between the Gestapo and the GPU, and when revolutionaries from Poland to Spain were ground between the two millstones. In a recent book, *The GPU in the Trotskyist Movement* (New Park Publications, £3), Georges Vereeken shows how the Russian secret police were able to plant informers and assassins among George Orwell's comrades in Spain and among Trotsky's entourage in Mexico. In London this week he told me that when the frightened widows of the victims came to him for help in Brussels in the Thirties, he was sometimes able to enlist the aid of Paul-Henri Spaak, now best known as a founder of the EEC but then still sympathetic to Trotsky. As Minister of the Interior, Spaak was able to invoke an old law which had protected Hapsburg refugees. By such devices did the few survivors manage to stay together.

There is, in reality, very little chance that much new information will come to light. But peculiar wrinkles emerge in the existing evidence. Under the Freedom of Information Act in the United States, the FBI have been asked to disclose their files on Trotsky's assassin. This they have refused to do, on the amazing grounds that it might violate the civil liberties of people still domiciled in America. By what may be coincidence, the *New York Times* recently reported that the FBI has admitted 94 burglaries of the offices of the Socialist Workers Party between 1960 and 1966. Many other violations are being cited in a lawsuit brought by the party – Trotskyism's largest single group – against the White House, the FBI and the CIA.

For Vanessa Redgrave and her co-thinkers to accuse the SWP of being penetrated by the Russian secret police is thus, to say the least of it, inopportune for the party and the lawsuit. Her friend Harold Robins told me that when a crime is committed you should always ask who benefits. This is a crude method of proceeding (though Trotsky himself did employ it in deciding that Stalin ordered the assassination of Kirov). But if we apply it to the latest round of internecine accusations, then it is the FBI who stand to gain. Who is penetrating whom? The point here is not to make accusations, but to illustrate the importance of paranoia. J. Edgar Hoover used to say that the power of the FBI was not that it *was* everywhere, but that its Leftist opponents *believed* it to be everywhere.

Thirty-six years too late, the trail is cold by now. As Peter Porter says in his poem *History*, when Willy Marx jumped in front of a tram the day before the Anschluss, with plans for Hitler's assassination in his shoes:

> no one knows which party organisation
> ordered his death. Six middle-class
> boys from a racially-mixed Galician
> town, three of them Jews and only
> one with a widow at a New England
> college. Their story will not be told.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Glyn Jones

The Open-Door University

There are some views to which distance lends perspective, not enchantment. Our descendants will look with disbelief at the snail's pace of educational change – an average of 30 years for one year's rise in the school leaving age. They will understand only too clearly that we *had* to discover an antidote: an Open University to provide in later life for those who were deprived of educational opportunity. The OU, sometimes described as the second chance, though palpably for many it is the one and only chance, requires only that you be over 21. Ten years ago its planning committee said:

> We took it as axiomatic that no formal academic qualifications would be required for registration as a student. Anyone could try his or her hand and only failure to progress adequately would be a bar to the continuation of studies.

There are now 50,000 students reading degree courses in their spare time – courses in every respect comparable with the standard degree course at any university. More than 14,800 have already graduated. Most students, accepted on a first-come first-served basis, are between their mid-twenties and their mid-forties; and, since to some extent they pay their way, the OU makes relatively small call on national resources.

The Open University is a successful liberal idea. It is a generous concept and it represents the most heartening and significant single educational innovation in Britain in this century. It didn't happen easily, and its future sometimes looks shaky – which makes it the more important to tell its story, assess its success and assure its future.

The structure may now be too strong to pull down, but its influence could still be eroded by that acid group of Thatcher followers who would dearly like to reassert the little meanness they covet in their educational model. Their achievement is enshrined in a few figures: a 1973 survey showed that 75 per cent of American 18-year-olds were still at school; in Sweden 45 per cent; in Britain a mere 20 per cent.

Yet the OU's prosaic buildings squatting in the fields of Milton Keynes (Britain's new city) suggest no hint of a challenge to anyone or anything. More like, at first glance, the home of a light engineering company just relocated from London. Approached closer and it could be taken for a clutter of commercial premises, maybe a credit reference agency with several million personal files on all of us. The analogy with commerce lingers even when you know better. The OU does, after all, generate a vast and ceaseless paper-chase all around the country, its mailing list including some of HM's prisoners, a number of psychiatric cases whose doctors have prescribed a course of study as a useful therapy, as well as the other 50,000. It has ample arms. They embrace multitudes of sinners and sailors, day-dreamers and dockers, far too many teachers, and all of the ordinary people who have dedicated themselves to digging a degree out of the remains of the abandoned washing up, after bathing the baby and before going to sleep – in order to rise early next morning for a sunrise lecture followed by TV at teatime and biscuits. The OU, a student reminded me, is not for the dilettante or the half-hearted. You've got to carve the time out of your life, and for most it is a major test of will.

Up the stairs sits the Vice-Chancellor, or should we call him the managing director of a student-free campus? No, he's the Vice-Chancellor all right, an Edinburgh chemist who fought as hard as anyone to secure academic respectability for his remarkable institution. He insists that the OU is unique (it is; better than foreign models), that it suffers because of the lack of students on the campus (it does), and that while it may look like a limited company, it isn't. But Sir Walter Perry considers the matter and adds that if the place were run as a business it couldn't possibly make money; it takes two years to write a course, and what company could afford that? Add the point that it would depend almost entirely on the postman, not the salesman, and even the physical analogy seems frivolous. But Sir Walter latches on to it:

> Why does our academic year start on 1 January? Not because we are a business but because we want to do certain things at a certain time of the year. In a sense we are parasitic, riding on the backs of other universities. We use their buildings when they are vacant, in the summer, for our summer schools. It is essential for us to talk to our students at about that time of the year, so we just adjust our programmes so that we can use other people's facilities at the time when they are available. In no other way could we do what we set out to do as cheaply as this.

Sir Walter talks with pleasure of the fight for recognition. Battle commenced with the decision to develop undergraduate courses of a standard equal to any in Britain. The air was sour with educational and political enmity. One factor that helped win the day was the quality of the staff acquired from other universities. Another road to academic acceptance was the 5,000-strong part-time staff drawn mainly from within the academic world. Word got round; those involved could hardly knock the institution; they would only bruise themselves.

Assured integrity and an Edinburgh-inspired attitude towards thrift may in themselves be gratifying. But the real test lies in the staying power of the students. They can drop out of the OU if they wish; and they can drop back in again when conditions are more propitious for them. Opponents predicted a 95 per cent drop-out, but between 50 and 60 per cent of the first wave of students now seem likely to obtain degrees at a cost to the nation of less than one-third the cost per student at a conventional university. Even if the drop-out rate were as high as 85 per cent, the OU, on its own reckoning, would still be cheaper than the norm.

Cost effectiveness is a flag wagged ceaselessly by the staff – arts and science. Economy is one of the most powerful weapons in the armoury; a major defence against slicing or bending the OU into a shape which goes against the will of its staff. Degrees are built up on a credit system. A student gets a credit for completing a one-year course, continually assessed with a final three-hour exam. Six credits qualify for the ordinary degree, eight are needed for honours. A credit course demands 32 weekly units of work, each needing 10-14 hours of study a week. Students can take a maximum of two courses per year – an exceptionally hard choice but one which makes graduating within three years a possibility. Crucial to the OU are its distance teaching methods. The courses are written by the central academic staff, who face an unusual onus: most of them have never experienced anything so complex before. Professor Arnold Kettle points out:

> You have got to think very closely about your students and their problems. They are not simply a bunch of 18-year-olds. There is no easy composite picture of them. Mature men and women, they want a degree for reasons of their own, studying alone. Some do it for promotion; some for more money – especially in the teaching world; some are housewives, some mothers; all have different backgrounds and many do not know what they want, except to broaden their experience. Every word you write must be comprehensible to all. We have to ask ourselves questions asked at no other university. We are not lecturers who devise a course for our own satisfaction and then give a few lectures on it. All the time we must ask whether it is justified to spend this amount of time on this, instead of doing that. We have got to be more purposeful.

Precision of language, clarity, unambiguousness matter more than they do anywhere else. There is seldom an opportunity or the time to answer queries about sloppy or unintelligible parts of a course once it is in use. You have to be right first time. Science is especially tough; minimal standards of maths have to be met, but school teaching has left many students miserably bereft of an understanding, however elementary. Anyone who speaks and writes English can join an arts course almost anywhere along the line. But maths is a special language which has to be acquired before the major studies can start.

Courses take up to two years to write, at a cost of £300,000 a time. They are prepared by ten to 20 academics (in this case ten heads *are* better than one, they insist). A team may comprise academic staff from the same discipline or from several different disciplines. It will include BBC TV and radio staff producers (at present fighting a lively battle to stay in London near mainstream media colleagues rather than occupy a £5m. complex soon to be built on the campus). Early course drafts may be shown to outside consultants

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Parlez-vous electric?

There are thousands of tape-recorders with headsets in use in UK schools.

Thousands more are used each year by executives of multi-national companies on six-week intensive courses in a foreign language.

Headsets. Video tape-recording equipment. Magnetic tape. All these modern educational aids are powered by electricity.

The child learns his language idiomatically. So do the men. Men responsible for earning this country millions of pounds in export orders from foreign countries.

Exports are this country's life blood.

Electricity helps generate them.

THINKELECTRIC

The Electricity Council, England and Wales.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for comment, criticism and validation. Pilot broadcasts and draft written materials have to be tested among students before use. While the written materials are being produced the BBC programmes accompanying them are being recorded. In science a home kit, apart from correspondence, comprises 270 pieces of equipment (including a microscope) and 100 chemicals. One course now prescribes (and issues) a simple laser. Components have to be thought up, planned, produced and made available at the same time as the written courses begin.

Time is always short. The sense of urgency marks the OU out from its academic counterparts; the staff know it, and so does the student who has to keep up. For this reason the broadcasts have real value; they serve to pace the student, who has to complete a unit of work in time to take up the next unit and its fixed-time broadcast.

Apart from the OU's academic staff at Milton Keynes (themselves overwhelmingly outnumbered by clerical and administrative workers) there are 13 regional offices each with a regional director, staff tutors and course counsellors. They in turn are in touch with part-time tutors and counsellors based on 260 study centres spread the length and breadth of the country – and before anyone argues that this is a dreadful increase in the bureaucracy let me hasten to say that the numbers seem necessary and the pay pretty awful. This elaborate network exists mainly because the OU has to overcome the difficulties implicit from the start; distance, lack of a tutor, loneliness and isolation from like-minded students.

A Tool for the Dream

Much the same purpose is served by the broadcasts. It would be nearly impossible to teach science without them, and arts students, too, can see and hear Gielgud act a passage. Most important, they are another means of overcoming loneliness. It works both ways. Professor Kettle, going to the theatre in London, is well pleased to be confronted with a stranger who says: 'I'm one of your students.' Mrs Naomi McIntosh, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, recalls with something like motherly affection the number of students who introduce themselves by saying: 'I know your voice.'

The lengths to which part-time tutors will go to help their gaggle of 20 or so students is also touching. I know one who, apart from his tutorials, sets aside two hours, two evenings per week, solely to sit by his home phone awaiting calls for help, interpretation, discussion, criticism. He is not unique. The OU wins despite the complexities of the system it has devised. Its people make it work, believing in the idea while often scorning the system.

The original idea belongs to Harold Wilson, who is said to regard the OU as his greatest achievement. What he did was to take the best of what he had seen in multimedia courses in Moscow and Chicago and announce, in 1963, that a Labour government would establish a University of the Air. It was all of a piece with the mood. The 'white heat of the technological revolution' was being stoked up in strange places like hotels in Bloomsbury, where Labour's thinkers spent weekends consorting with technocrats and businessmen willing to wake up the country after the long, 13-year Tory doze. Robbins had declared for a vast increase in higher education for all who could benefit from it. Education was a tool, one of the ways to realise the social democratic dream. The relationship between education, productivity and prosperity seemed conclusive; more, in terms of education, must mean richer.

Battle of Top People

Wilson determined to keep his promise. He hit on a happy idea; he would play father, but Jennie Lee should be midwife. She had been made a junior minister at the Department of Education and Science, already a little overburdened with junior ministers. She was there to promote the arts and she recalls feeling like a cuckoo in the nest, at least one minister too many.

Meanwhile, Wilson himself was finding that his concept got no response elsewhere; not from his ministerial appointees, senior officials of the DES, and certainly not from the Treasury. Senior colleagues were indifferent, occasionally lending supercilious hostility to the debate. It was not only Oxonians with first-class degrees, like Crosland and Jenkins, who thought the proper treatment one of disdain. Dick Crossman would have none of it – though he admitted (typically) a few weeks before he died that he had been wrong.

When the idea of promoting the use of radio and TV, cassettes and tape for higher education was handed to Jennie Lee she made two conditions: that she dealt only with Wilson all the way, and that they would negotiate direct with the Treasury for money. She now says (no doubt correctly): 'I was able to survive only because of this.' One of her early acts was to discard the title University of the Air, which she loathed, in favour of the Open University. A battle of top people began. It was conducted with the civilities of high office – and the brutalities.

When the Treasury choked on costs, Wilson gave Arnold Goodman a brief to raise money. He went to America and returned without money – but with conviction. Then there was the broadcasting problem. Sir Hugh Greene helped generously; the BBC became an ally. When almost no permanent secretary would entertain the idea Sir William Armstrong suggested a dinner. Goodman said he'd give the dinner. It was a teach-in. One or two began to wilt. To set fire to it Jennie Lee said it should be treated as the Second Reading of the Bill, and the debate was successful. The Open University was on; a committee was, of course, formed immediately. The fight was now something more than the fight to found an unusual institution; now it had to be given style and credibility. As Jennie Lee recalls:

> We got our Royal Charter at a ceremony in London held at the Royal Society. There were some who criticised, saying: 'Why are you going through all this paraphernalia?' But people like ritual and they like ceremony and as I'd started by out-snobbing the snobs I thought I had better go on that way.

Harold Wilson had chosen his midwife well; she was ambitious for her baby, always demanding the best for it:

> Adult education was always a special concern for the Labour movement. I sometimes got very cross because they were not ambitious enough. They'd got so used to a patch on the backside of their trousers they felt undressed without one.

Baroness Lee did not forget the end while struggling for the means. What mattered most was the quality of the staff and the students. In the first teaching year, 1971, 24,000 students enrolled. One of them, a housewife with two children, offers this description of what it meant for her (and many others):

> If they have the ability people can go straight to work of university standard and cock a snook at the education system. But exhaustion and family demands always threatened to defeat me. Spouses have to be very understanding. Summer schools are a marvellous mixture of young and old. The tutors enjoy it and we keep them up to the mark. As for what you read in the *News of the World*, it is mostly true, but my answer to people who snigger is that they might remember the lonely hours of studying we have put in. If they can do that they, too, can avail themselves of an opportunity for 'soul to soul' romances. And remember that today's middle-class housewife is often the daughter of a craftsman – e.g. me. I feel the group I represent are forgotten when people complain about the OU not serving the working class.*

Who could argue with a spirit like that? Of the class of 1971, 21 per cent of those graduating in 1974 would not have been eligible for any higher education by conventional standards. They were people who often lacked confidence, who worried about the loss of face if they failed, and who were anxious about the attitudes of the rest of the family. In the end they went on out of determination and the simple conviction: 'I knew I had it in me.'

Small Human Triumphs

Most of the 1971 students were between 25 and 45 years old, most were married. Less than a third (now 43 per cent) were women, less than 10 per cent were housewives (whatever the news stories of the time suggested). Average pay for the family breadwinner was about £1,800 a year: many expected to better themselves by the degree; many wanted it to prove something to themselves. Twenty per cent had left school at 15 or younger, but 37 per cent left at 16 or 17. The majority had some O-levels, and many fewer had an 'A'. About 25 per cent were in clerical or manual jobs. A massive 40 per cent were teachers, grabbing the OU course early on because a qualification means an automatic salary increase. Their numbers have now shrunk to 32 per cent of all students.

But figures are no guide to the small human triumphs. In the struggle to pass

* True. Of the 1975 intake 52 per cent had fathers in manual occupations.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hardly anyone thought the course was anything but tough. Dedication is most frequently named as the essential characteristic. The long and lonely hours in the kitchen or the bedroom, the break from the family, are the common memories. OU students exhibit the kind of courage which entails restraint certainly, sacrifice probably.

The OU seems to have an assured future, at any rate in purely numerical terms. In 1976 there were 53,000 applicants for 17,000 places. The waiting list grows longer, not shorter. And if post-graduate and research work are among the touchstones of a successful university, again the OU seems to be scoring as highly as the economy allows it. In research a single example indicates good health: the physics research group is working with seven other universities in America and Europe in the search for 'charm', a coyly named fundamental particle in the nucleus of the atom, the stuff of which the universe (and us) is made. High-energy physics at this level is as *recherché* and as difficult to comprehend as any branch of science; it really does stand at the frontier of human knowledge and understanding of the physical world.

On the arts side, Christopher Hill, the Master of Balliol, is coming, on his retirement, to write a course on 17th-century English revolution. Dr Hill would be a catch for any university; he is coming to the OU. With all the evidence of success why do so many of the staff believe that things have gone sour? Youth itself is one problem; the academic staff is relatively young and the ambitious see very clearly that there will be no room near or at the top for some years. Haunting the campus is all the apparatus of a modern business machine – career structure, job evaluation, management representation. While the OU will not fold because of strains from within, it has to consider its own staff if it is not to have a haemorrhage. As in every sizeable organisation everyone swears that the administrative machine is too heavy and bureaucracy is blatant; few have clear ideas about locating the trouble and suggesting possible remedies.

Externally there is the university's role in the future. The OU is understandably tender over this question; it has had enough of people (especially the Tories) finding roles for it which compromise its status. The staff fairly claim that the university is already contributing more to the economy than the conventional universities. An OU course is far less likely to do for industry what Oxbridge does so successfully: turn the students against it. A great many OU students are already working in industry and if they take a short OU course on, say, computer science, that must benefit the country in a tangible way. But eyeing this success governments may ask: Couldn't the OU help more, and more effectively, than its ossified counterparts?

While setting its face against vocational training the OU might well redistribute some of its effort so that technology gets a greater share of resources and a greater number of places, together with management studies. Because the OU is unusually socially responsive it does not follow that it need not try harder to help the country by deliberately unbalancing some of its disciplines.

One of the biggest challenges it faces is the question of equality. It still does not have a fair proportion of working-class students. Approximately 75 per cent of the population had no education beyond the age of 15 (1961 census); but only 14 per cent of that group registered for the OU. The educationally deprived continue to be deprived – and that must have an effect on all our futures. In many ways distance teaching is the hardest form of studying for these people, who live in homes where television is biased towards pap on all channels, where there is little chance of a room for study, and where literacy standards are often low. They need precisely what the OU cannot offer: a one-to-one relationship between student and tutor. One argument suggests that the OU should serve community-based educational schemes, thus providing more face-to-face tuition for those with few advantages.

Nevertheless the success of the OU shows that people with few, if any, formal qualifications can succeed equally well in higher education alongside students who start with O- or A-levels. Perhaps the next function of the OU is to break the stranglehold exercised by conventional universities on the school curriculum. That would lay the way open to reshaping the secondary education of young people. With nothing but benefit to them.

Donald Gould

The Psychiatrist as Cinderella

There are around 10,000 people shut up in mental hospitals in England against their will. Many are wrongly detained. They are there under one or other of the provisions of the Mental Health Act 1959. This bulky piece of legislation covers all manner of circumstances faced by those of us unfortunate enough to be judged insane by a psychiatrist, ranging from the manner in which our estates are to be handled, to the penalties to be expected by somebody attempting a sexual adventure with a patient in a mental hospital. In particular the Act lays down the conditions under which we can be deprived of our liberty, and the further restrictions of civil rights and freedoms which (again, on the say-so of a psychiatrist) may be imposed upon anybody so confined.

For some years now there has been a growing disquiet concerning the power which the Act puts into the hands of a section of the medical profession not famous for its sense and sensibility, or for the quality of the men and women it attracts to its ranks. There are a good many wise, compassionate, experienced psychiatrists, but there are also far too many doctors practising psychiatry, and occupying positions of influence in NHS psychiatric hospitals, who have been attracted to the trade for one of two bad reasons.

For the native Briton who has achieved a medical qualification the decision to specialise in psychiatry offers a comparatively easy road to consultant status and a secure career. Psychiatry (with geriatrics) is ill-regarded by the rest of the profession, and the rewards earned by psychiatrists, in terms of money, honours, and acclaim, are smaller and fewer than those earned by heart surgeons, neurologists, paediatricians, or gynaecologists. The competition is weak. For the non-native doctor a junior job in a mental hospital is often the only option open. Such posts are unpopular. The institutions are all too often grim, understaffed, and discouraging places in which to work. The comparatively few young talented British or overseas medical graduates who do have a genuine vocation for psychiatry seek their training in the comparatively few excellent psychiatric hospitals we possess (like the Maudsley), or in the psychiatric units attached to teaching and district general hospitals.

The rest of the jobs – those in the many huge lunatic asylums which pepper the British countryside, and which house almost half the total of all NHS hospital beds – tend to be filled by Commonwealth graduates whose training, experience and ability to speak English are too often inadequate.

There's nothing wrong with African or Indian or Pakistani doctors. But *no* young graduate can flourish and develop proper skills in such medical slums.

It is unfortunately also true that many mental nurses are not men and women of the highest calibre. Just as there are some excellent and humane psychiatrists, so are there large numbers of caring and sensitive and conscientious people who have devoted their lives to the onerous and often frustrating and apparently unrewarding task of nursing the mentally disabled. But too many who embark upon such a career with good intentions and high ideals degenerate under the pressures to which they are subjected.

For these reasons, and because we allow our psychiatric work-force too little money, and inadequate resources, and force them to work in ugly, crowded, ill-designed barracks, the average level of treatment and care offered to the mentally ill is scandalously low. I have spoken to patients in the notorious and neglected 'back wards' of mental hospitals who are kept there against their will, and who have been there for years, and who see a psychiatrist no more than once a year. They have often been fed with tranquillisers for months because the drugs are supposed to be keeping them quiet and under control. That is not treatment. It is not medicine. It is custodial care of a low order.

And this is where the Mental Health Act 1959 has so sadly failed the community and the unfortunate victims of mental illness it was designed to serve and protect. The main

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provisions of the Act – specifically those concerned with the compulsory treatment of the mentally disturbed – are based upon the assumption that the average British psychiatrist in the average British mental hospital, is not only qualified to judge who should be locked away, but is also able to offer, more often than not, the means for restoring the sick in mind to normality. This, sadly, is a myth, and because various individuals and committees and organisations (notably MIND) have felt that the Act has not functioned in the hoped-for manner, an inter-departmental committee representing the DHSS, the Home Office, the Lord Chancellor's Department and the Welsh Office, has now produced a Consultative Document, examining ways in which the provisions of the Act might be modified in the light of the experience of the past 16 years.

It is a disappointment, largely because, like the Act itself, this detailed and often thoughtful review is centred round the idea that society has the right and the duty to constrain the mentally disturbed not only for the protection of their fellow citizens, but also for their own good.

Of course there are criminal lunatics possessed of such dangerous proclivities that we must be protected from them. Of course there are people so seriously subnormal or disturbed that they must be kept in some kind of custody. But we are dealing with the liberty of the subject, and we should ensure that every compulsory detention order is subjected to the most rigorous and repeated scrutiny by people better fitted than your average psychiatrist to judge who, for society's sake, really must be locked away. For the sake of liberty we should accept greater risks. Certainly lock up the psychopathic poisoners but don't allow anybody to be imprisoned indefinitely in a mental hospital ward simply because he or she *might* kick up rough outside.

The Mental Health Act 1959 should indeed be reviewed, and high time too, but from the standpoint of the conviction that people should only be locked away as a last resort, and never simply on the strength of the 'professional' opinion of a callow social worker backed up by a second-rate doctor.

Bernard Croft

Suitable Apparel

> Every Bishop, Priest, or Deacon shall wear such apparel as shall be suitable to the gravity of his office, and shall be sign and mark, as well to others as to those committed to his spiritual charge, of his holy calling and ministry, except for some urgent cause wherein we charge his conscience, or for the purpose of innocent recreation. – *The Canons Ecclesiastical of the Church of England* (*LXXXII*).

So reads Canon 82, 'Of the Dress of Ministers', following that on 'The Devotional Life of Ministers', and coming before that dealing with their manner of life otherwise – which stipulates that 'no Minister holding any cathedral preferment or benefice, any curacy or lectureship, or who shall be licensed or otherwise allowed to perform the duties of any ecclesiastical office whatever, shall take to farm for occupation by himself any lands exceeding 80 acres in the whole, for the purpose of occupying or using or cultivating the same, or by himself or by any other for him to his use engage or carry on any trade or dealing for gain or profit, or deal in any goods, wares, or merchandise, except on such terms and conditions as are permitted by the statute law in that behalf provided.' In short, the tradition is that a Clerk in Holy Orders may only write or teach to gain or supplement his living over and above farming any glebe he may have of the prescribed proportions.

A good many of us have in our time indulged in authorship of some sort or other, or done full- or part-time schoolmastering, though one colleague of the cloth I happen to know has for many years (and for several years before his retirement) been the proprietor of a very prosperous antique business. It could be, of course, that the business was officially owned by his wife. And why not? Of recent years the children of many a vicarage have had a little jam spread on the bread and butter provided by their father's stipend by means of the full or part-time teaching or other paid employment of their mother. But it is Canon 82 and clerical clothing I am on about at present. The heat wave of the past summer focused my attention once again on this. A spell of really hot weather always brings out the worst, sartorially speaking, in the average Englishman. Only those of us who have spent some time of our lives in tropical kit really rejoice in such a heat wave – and show off by bringing out crisp bush-jackets and tropical suitings.

It so happened that the General Synod of the Church of England – held this time at York – happened to come within the heat wave, if not when it was at its height. I was not present at this, but a friend who was told me that some very strange hot weather apparel was to be seen there, and not only among the rank and file of the inferior clergy, but also among the top brass – saving their Graces at the very top. One or two bishops, I understand, were only to be identified as such by their episcopal rings. No doubt they had that saving clause in mind, about 'urgent cause'. Or could a meeting of Synod possibly be felt to fall under the heading of 'innocent recreation'? Some will recall that there was an archdeacon who said: 'May I take off my gaiters in bed?' But to speak of gaiters is to be talking about a lost world. They went out, with shovel hats and aprons, long ago.

But only a week or so before the General Synod at York, and right at the peak of the heat wave, there was a special occasion in the Minster which drew bishops, priests, deacons, and layfolk from what we used to call the West Riding. Inside and outside the cathedral church of St Peter there were some strange sights that day. Among the congregation in the nave, a row or two in front of me, there was a clergyman who looked like one from the waist upwards (hard round white collar attached to a shining black shirt) but below the waist looked like the Pied Piper. And when the ceremony was over and bishops from distant parts were preparing to return home to their distant, if not dead or cruel, sees, I caught sight of one standing beside his car, only partly shielded from view by his lady wife, stripping off his purple shirt to don an open-necked secular one. I could not imagine that dear old man, Leonard Hedley Burrows, who ordained me at Sheffield some 40 years ago now, ever doing that. Nor his good lady wife so aiding and abetting him.

Strange, I could not help thinking, that not one of those bishops, priests or deacons seemed to possess a tropical-weight cassock (of black, purple, grey or white), which is the ideal garment for that kind of weather. Little or nothing need be worn underneath; as I well remember from sizzling hot Sundays in the Canal Zone of Egypt, when I would go to the altar in such a lightweight foundation garment, with the lightest of vestments over it, and only bathing trunks beneath, the wax candles bending over before me. Nuns who still wear their traditional dress know how cool such garments can be; the nearest thing, after all, to the suitable clothing for hot countries worn by the natives, men and women. But nowadays many of them seem to dress like district nurses.

During this period of unusual heat (especially for the North of England) some visitors to our cathedrals have presented a problem for the officials responsible for decency and order. We have never been as strict about suitable apparel as churches across the Channel. (I have myself been turned away from entering a Spanish cathedral, because I was wearing shorts and a short-sleeved shirt). That splendid figure of a man, the beadle or major-domo of St Mark's Venice, can still be seen turning away women who, in his opinion, are improperly dressed for entering the hallowed portals. And certainly some seeking entrance there – and at other Continental churches – are indeed dreadful sights. We long ago forsook the Pauline ruling that the ladies should have their heads covered. But this summer on duty days inside York Minster I must confess I have been a little worried over masculine visitors coming in wearing but the briefest of shorts, and some ladies in little more than bikinis. But, these days, one can never be sure that the inappropriately, inadequately clad male, on being tactfully and courteously approached about his dress, or the lack of it, will not turn out to be a visiting vicar; a colleague of the cloth – with the cloth off. And, of course, those who nowadays have pectoral crosses dangling on their chests are not all bishops.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kingsley Amis

Words and Meanings

Now and then in this series, instead of devoting the whole of my space to a single topic I will move from one to another, as this week. Some topics ask pressingly to be treated at length, but are such that first-rate examples of the misbehaviour in question turn up only rarely, and so delay supervenes. One of these is mixed metaphor, my file on which is promising but still thin. What about some of you readers helping to fatten it? My scope is necessarily limited: I seldom get out to the fringes, where some of the richest material is to be found. All assistance welcome. (NB: *mixed* metaphor, not just one metaphor followed by another.)

'Hopefully' continues its triumphant career, and more and more adverbs are beginning to follow it. One of the most popular is 'regretfully':

> The judges heard that X's wife had taken her own life after he went to jail. Lord Justice Y commented: 'Regretfully, that is no ground for extending leniency towards him.'

I can't see any good reason for not using here the obvious and established 'regrettably'. There are, however, two grounds for extending leniency towards Lord Justice Y. (1) He was presumably talking, not writing. It is then, when there is little time for reflection and none for revision, that the pull of modish illiteracy is hardest to resist. I myself once floated a 'thankfully' in a TV interview that the *Listener* unthankfully printed, and dire was the pasting I got from readers. (2) There is no possibility of ambiguity in this context. Not so in what follows:

> A few Ugandans were regretfully killed at Entebbe, but by the same token 'innocent' German soldiers were killed in World War II . . . [letter in NS]

I doubt if it's possible to be completely sure that 'with feelings or professions of regret on the part of those responsible' is not meant, or perhaps partly meant. Certainly the reader is made to pause without profit. In the next example, the difficulty is the other way on:

> The GPO informed me (regretfully) that owing to so many important people and events vieing for the 1976 Stamp Programme that they will be unable to issue a commemorative stamp for Frank Richards.

It *looks* here as if the GPO had (however uncharacteristically) professed regret, but one can't be quite sure that 'regrettably' is not meant, especially in view of the nearby doubling of 'that' and the unconventional spelling of 'vying'. This is real Gresham's Law stuff: soon it will be impossible, or inadvisable, to use 'regretfully' in the good sense in case people think you mean it in the bad. There is no reason, either, to suppose that the slide will ever stop. 'Fearfully, the Russians are coming'? 'Irritably, England lost the toss again'?

Clever switch to new topic: whatever the shortcomings of the writer last quoted, at least he has not forgotten what 'vie' means. Others have forgotten or never known:

> Comedy about a handsome, talented negro played by Sidney Poitier vying for the hand of liberated-but-bourgeois Katharine Houghton.

As those unlucky enough to have seen *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* will be aware, the Poitier character is not vying with anyone: there are no rival suitors. To vie is to compete, not just to strive or try. (Quite likely this particular weakening of sense can be traced to the 'i' and the 'v' of 'strive' and the fact that 'try' rhymes with 'vie'.)

The process is clearer in the following two passages:

> Linda believes *avidly* that everyone needs love to keep going. ¶Politically, this *voracious* writer of letters to the press has long vented his feelings in public.

What has happened in essentials is that a would-be smart stylist who is at least learned enough to know that both 'avid' and voracious' started life by meaning something like 'physically greedy' has written about 'an avid reader' or 'a voracious collector of bric-a-brac'. At this stage the adjectives carry what Fowler called dormant metaphors: if the idea of literal avidity or voracity happened to cross the reader's mind, he would be undisturbed. Then along slouches someone who has forgotten or never known the literal meanings, and he concludes semi-consciously that here are two good words that, from their context, must mean something like 'keen' or 'enthusiastic'. (There may be sound-connections here too, as in straightforward malapropisms: 'active', 'fervid', 'rabid'; 'vivacious', 'ferocious'.)

When the times comes, our sloven attaches his discoveries to the notions of believing and of writing, and everybody is happy, or at least indifferent, except those – many? few? – who remember those literal meanings. In their minds the dormant metaphors are forced back to life, and on top of would-be smartness and real ignorance and incuriosity are piled the absurdities of gorging belief and ravenous letter-writing. Aargh!

Now for a finest specially-select directors' ambiguity:

> The Archbishop had said that no homosexual or person with liberal views on homosexuality should be a clergyman. His views were described by the Rev. John Dryden as '*diabolical*'.

If forced to act in one way or the other, which should the Archbishop do, have the Rev. John up in front of a consistory court for grave indiscipline, or just tell him not to talk like a berk whose wishes have been crossed? More of this another time; for the moment, try reciting these lines aloud:

> At a time when the old
> Are dying of cold,
> The young are starved of work
> And the landscape is scarred with unfelled trees,
> Dying of Dutch elm disease . . .

Unfortunately this energetic Kiplingian start isn't kept up. The sixth line goes:

> Could not the young be trained to cut the trees when they are felled to provide fuel for the old?

My apologies to the worthy author: what I have done is to set out as verse the otherwise-unchanged beginning of a genuine letter to *The Times* last February. Some people's inner ear is on perpetual listening watch; that of others, including a great many supposed poets, is stuffed with wax. I should love to have the story confirmed that an Opposition peer once opened a speech in the House of Lords by saying: 'The Factory Act, as a matter of fact, is a most unsatisfactory Act.'

(Let me repeat here what I said in my first article: all examples, unless given in quotes, are genuine. I reserve the right to shorten or alter immaterially to save possible embarrassment, as with X, Y, and the Rev. John Dryden.)

To Overseas Readers

If you would like to read the NEW STATESMAN every week but find it difficult to obtain regularly from news-stands outside the UK, we invite you to take out a subscription for a year or six months. Airmail copies arrive within two or three days of publication.

TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS: 15 PER CENT INTRODUCTORY DISCOUNT

Airmail Subscriptions: One Year

	Full rate	Introductory
Europe	£17.50	**£14.80**
Middle East	£19.00	**£16.10**
Africa, India	£20.00	**£17.00**
Australia, NZ, Far East	£21.00	**£17.80**
USA, Canada	$40.00	**$34.00**

Six months rates are half these

You may pay by sterling or dollar cheque, or by International Money Order. Please complete the form and send it with your remittance to:

Subscriptions Supervisor,
New Statesman,
Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ

Block letters please
Name.....
Address.....

Period: Year/6 months
Start date.....
I enclose £.....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London Diary

☐ Tom Driberg was one of my oldest friends. He attended my 21st birthday dinner and nearly disrupted it by his attentions to the waiter. He was a man of infinite variety. He was a devout Anglo-Catholic, though this did not prevent his being half the congregation when Evelyn Waugh was received into the Roman church. At Oxford he was already high in literary and social circles, with his own column in an undergraduate journal. Later no less a figure than Edith Sitwell recommended him to Lord Beaverbrook as the original William Hickey. Tom's Hickey was more than a gossip columnist. He knew the current fashions in literature and art. He belonged to smart society rather than gossiping about it. Tom was also homosexual, flagrant and unashamed. It was a constant surprise to me that he ran into so little trouble with the police. Shortly after he had been elected to Parliament during the war, he was caught in Glasgow. On the way to the police station, he said: 'This will make fine propaganda for Dr Goebbels – British MP on serious charge.' The policeman took the point and told Tom to, I was going to write bugger off, but that is hardly the appropriate phrase. On another occasion Tom was convicted at Bow Street. Lord Beaverbrook ensured that no mention of the case appeared in any newspaper. Thereafter everyone took Tom's homosexuality for granted. It is a tribute to the decency of British public life that the Conservatives made no attempt to frame Tom even when he was chairman of the Labour Party.

☐ Most of all Tom Driberg was a life-long socialist. There was a time when he and I composed the entire Communist Party at Oxford University. I soon lapsed. Tom remained a loyal member of the Party until 1939. He was elected as an Independent at Maldon in 1942 and joined the Labour Party when he ran there again in 1945. Tom was not at all a clever man or an intellectual. He did not understand either Marx or Keynes. He was not interested in office. He simply knew that socialism was a righteous cause, and he served it unquestioningly. If he had a leader at all it was George Lansbury, whom he knew well from his Oxford days, and like Lansbury he believed that socialism would be achieved by 'a change of heart'. He was unshakably loyal to the working class despite his own sophisticated way of life and as much at home in a working-men's club as in Mayfair. On every issue he took the left-wing line. He championed the cause of Indian and then of African freedom. For him all men were truly equal. Now I come to think of it, if I were asked if I had ever known a good man, I should reply: 'Yes, Tom Driberg was a good man.'

☐ In this year of anniversaries, one anniversary, I notice, is not being celebrated. It is just 20 years since the Anglo-French aggression at Suez. I addressed one of the first meetings on this affair, I think on 10 August 1956. At that time the Labour Party was treating the Suez Canal as an international waterway and calling on the UN to intervene against Nasser. For me the canal was Egyptian and the British, or rather Anglo-French, threats against Egypt were not different from Hitler's threats against Poland. I told my audience that they had often sneered at the Germans for not resisting Hitler. Now was the time for us to resist a British government that was following the same wicked course. Kingsley Martin, who had just written for the NEW STATESMAN yet another article invoking the UN, was in the audience. The next day John Freeman, then assistant editor, said to me: 'Whatever did you do to Kingsley? He swept into the office this morning and said – tear up that leader. This is the Boer War all over again, and we are going to fight it!' I, too, thought that we were in for all the combats and unpopularity of the pro-Boers and cheerfully contemplated going to prison. As it turned out, the conspirators could not even conspire properly. They bungled their operation, which ended in failure and discredit within a week. The aspiring aggressors brought down the British Empire with them. The affair was consigned to oblivion. Its architects still enjoy an unblemished reputation.

☐ Once more the Apprentice Boys (usually elderly men) have marched in Derry. Once more there have been riots. Once more people have been killed. British forces have now been in Northern Ireland for eight years. The situation is worse than when they first went. The attempted remedies have all been in vain. The Convention has been and gone. Power-sharing has been aired to no avail. What exactly do we hope to achieve in Northern Ireland? The British Government apparently expects that one day the people of Northern Ireland, including the Roman Catholics, will come on to their side against the IRA. This is unlikely. However much ordinary Irish people dislike the IRA and its doings, they will not turn to the heirs of those who killed half a million Irish during the rebellion of 1798 and allowed two million Irish to die during the great famine. Nearly everyone refuses to recognise that the basic cause of the Irish problem is the presence of the British in Ireland and always has been. As long as British forces remain in Northern Ireland, the situation is frozen. Nothing decisive can happen until they go. The outcome may be unpleasant as it often is when men refuse to face a problem. Maybe our apprehensions are exaggerated. Responsibility is often a school for wisdom, and we have denied responsibility to the Irish for many generations. At any rate there is only one course for the British to follow for the sake of the Irish as well as for their own. It is: Troops Out Now.

☐ Fashion notes (male) for the hot weather. Ties are on the way out. They were always a useless encumbrance. Now, I hope, they have gone for good. After all, women go around with open necks even in winter. Jackets have also been often discarded. But how shall we carry our impedimenta? I have to cope with a box of matches, tobacco pouch, diary and at least two wallets for all the bits of paper modern life imposes on me. I need a bus pass, a cheque card, my NUJ card, a ticket for the London library, one for the public library, one for the British Library, season ticket for ancient monuments, driving licence, car-insurance certificate, MOT certificate, and a form saying that my eyes must go to a hospital – I suppose I ought to have a similar card for my kidneys as well. A brief-case is too clumsy. What we need is a shoulder-strap bag, aggressively male in design. I am sorry to see men have failed to get rid of long trousers even in hot weather. German and Swiss businessmen go to their offices in shorts. So should we. We have a good precedent. The British Army is the only one where shorts are service dress in hot weather. For some reason opinion here is against them. Going up Grind's Brook on Kinder Scout recently in shorts I was rebuked by a warden and told I ought to wear knee breeches.

☐ One of the first entries I ever read in the London Diary, or its earlier equivalent, was a description by H. W. Massingham of Copford church in Essex. So I am in good company when I write of my own recent excursion. I left London on M1, surely the most detestable road in England or perhaps in the world. Once I turned off into Buckinghamshire I was in an enchanted land – empty roads and great deserted fields. I had thought to have been in the west of Ireland. We stopped first at Wing. This is the only Anglo-Saxon church with the external walls of its aisle standing, the only one with an unspoilt crypt for housing the relics, and one of the few with a perfect and highly ornamented apse. Pevsner says it is all 10th century; the Taylors (no relation) say it has a 7th-century core. I go with the Taylors. Stewkley, next stop, runs it close – a Norman church completely unchanged. All the same the Normans were barbarians compared to the Anglo-Saxons. We ended at Hillesden, one of the remotest churches in the country and one of the grandest. Its lavish panelling has the feel of King's College Chapel at Cambridge. Gilbert Scott acquired his love of Gothic here at the age of 15. Such churches are our greatest national treasures.

A. J. P. Taylor

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The National Front is to mount its own campaign against turban-wearing Sikh motorcyclists this autumn when a Government Bill exempting them from the crash helmet regulations becomes law.

Plans have been made for Front members, wearing towels round their heads and boot blacking on their faces, to ride motorcycles round the centres of provincial towns with Sikh communities. They will challenge the police to arrest them. – *Daily Telegraph* (A. Heigho)

☐ Mr Benedict Seffi, defending, said: 'He has never been in trouble before. He is widely respected and widely known. He has lived his whole life in Luton which is full of temptation.' –*The Daily Telegraph* (J. Jackson)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Familiar Figures—3

Bel Mooney

The BR Steward

He is the man behind the bar in the seedy, swaying buffet: cook, waiter, bar-man, dish-washer and book-keeper on British Rail. Thousands of miles of gleaming track, thousands of travellers' faces munching Travellers' Fare – both are as familiar to him as he is unnoticed by them. Bill Carbery, Chief Steward Grade 2, is the kind of worker who gives British Rail that elusive good name.

It is the 1.10 p.m. from Euston to Birmingham – a nothing-train carrying just a handful of people. Morning and evening the businessmen eat their huge platters, not forgetting to complain to each other about the price, but on this train there is no restaurant car. Instead Bill serves what they call, excruciatingly, the new Tasty Bite menu – bacon and eggs for 76p, or a steak for £2. One man in a suit, delighted to have this alternative to the egg sandwiches and boxed fruit pies, hears the price, decides on bacon and eggs, then switches back to the steak: 'Make it big and thick and juicy.' It's none of those, but garnished with a fried egg – and Bill Carbery makes a point of asking if it is all right. It could be the Dorchester, instead of the old-fashioned buffet car with its grimy orange curtains, and unfixed leatherette chairs.

As the houses with back yards and neat gardens slide by, and the looming power-stations, and the main roads packed with those who refuse to let something else take the strain, Bill Carbery never stops working – serving gin and tonic to an old lady, dishing up crisps and beer to two lads, sending countless customers back to their seats with a plastic-lidded coffee at 13p. Tom, the other steward, sets off down the train with silver pot and tray of sandwiches, and Bill cooks cheese on toast at 25p, then washes up. Men stand clicking beer cans open with brash confidence; at the tables people sit alone in silence. Rugby and Wolverhampton pass unnoticed in the tiny narrow galley: 'All you think of the whole time is getting your work done in time.'

His day starts at 4.45 a.m. when he wakes at his home in Edgware. At 6.15 he is at Euston – 'though I don't officially start till 6.45 a.m. but getting there early means I get all my preparations done without a rush'. The routine is complicated, and must be completed before the 7.40 run to Wolverhampton. 'First you go to the linen room at Euston and get your uniform – and the table-cloths too. Then to the dry stores and the kitchen stores to pick up my stock – I've put an order in the night before for whatever tea, bread, tomatoes, or whatever I might need. Then I go to the cellar and pick up that order. A porter takes all this to the train, and we put it away, and lay the tables for breakfast, and make all the sandwiches.'

He says that the public do not realise how much background work the job involves – nor how much paperwork he must complete. There are stock sheets (an elaborate system of records discourages 'fiddles') time sheets, takings sheets, summary sheets, plus a daily report – and this has to be fitted in during the journey, as well as the serving and washing up: 'People don't realise how pushed you are. We have to have our own breakfast in the sidings at Wolverhampton, in the 20 minutes while the train is being cleared.'

Bill Carbery actually likes that amorphous mass called 'the public' – the variety of men who consume the cans of beer and crisps that give him 5 per cent commission (to be divided among the two or three staff and added to the £45 basic wage). 'I find that if you're good to people they'll treat you well. I don't come to work to start arguing with passengers. If they're happy, I'm happy. And if you handle them right . . . one morning I'd laid up part of the next car for breakfast, and I'm not obliged to do that because this train doesn't have a full restaurant service. But I do it because people like it, and we get tips, and we sell more, so my guv'nor's happy. Anyway, there was this man sitting where I hadn't laid up, and he wouldn't move. Well, the customer is always right. So I said that I'd serve him where he was, but only after everyone else. He gave me a £1 tip!' He adds that he does not work for tips, as if slightly contemptuous that you might have thought it: 'If someone doesn't tip me he's either mean, or he doesn't believe in tipping. You could go on your bended knees for some people but they wouldn't leave you a penny. But it doesn't worry me – I work the way I do because I like things going smoothly . . . I really *like* this job, and do it in a way that makes it pleasant.'

That means putting up with foibles and aggression. 'Once there was a well-known Liberal MP who wanted to sit in a non-smoker, which wasn't laid up. I said he could, and I let him have kippers though they weren't on that menu. Afterwards I asked him for his autograph. He said: 'I never put pen to paper. I seduce other men's wives, but I never put pen to paper', and swept out. Another time some football supporters were giving the stewards a hard time, trying to steal from behind the bar – and one of them called Bill Carbery an 'Irish bastard', when he was in the galley. For once the customer was not right. 'When my mates told me, I went out and told him to come down to the guard's van – just the two of us, and see if he would repeat it. He backed down.'

Bill was born in Killarney 40 years ago. His mother ran a small family hotel, so from a very early age it was instilled into him that the customer is right. He did everything: cleaning, serving, skivvying in the kitchen. 'When I left school it was automatic that I'd do that. I came to England 18 years ago, and got a job with BR, and I've never wanted to change. The only thing I'd like is to run my own catering business full-time.'

As well as 'ordinary' train journeys Bill Carbery works in VIP trains, and on the royal train when needed. 'It's a set crew. Before money got scarce, Vickers, say, would hire a whole train to bring VIPs up to Barrow-in-Furness. And we did one for the CBI a year or two ago – travelling around England having seminars on the EEC in major cities. At the end of that one, Sir Campbell Adamson presented us each with a tankard. So from there it went on, and when a chief steward on the royal train died, I was asked if I'd like to have a go. Of course they looked into my past and all that and I had to sign the Official Secrets.' He doesn't seem impressed – or unimpressed – by the diversion, just says: 'It's not like *this* of course,' nodding round the vibrating buffet car. 'When Prince Andrew comes, he always comes by the galley, and waves at us, and shouts: "Hallo, slaves" – only as a joke of course. Those people, they're far more considerate. The royal family treat you like a person. And you get some ordinary people in *here* who think they're the Queen.'

Like the finger-clicking 'waiter'-shouting young executive, trying to impress his two girl companions, who irritated Bill so much he decided to play a trick. 'When it came to cheese I unwrapped a slab of butter and put it on the board. I knew he'd say "This is Stilton, and this Brie", and he did. When he came to the butter, he said to them: "This is Lancashire", and I said: "No, it's butter, sir". But I only made a fool of him because he'd tried to make one of me.'

'You meet all types. One night a girl of 18 came to the bar, and downed two huge neat whiskies. I thought that was strange. She said: 'After the next one I'm going to throw myself off the train.' I asked 'why?', but she just swallowed it, and went over to the window, pulling it down. I stopped her, and asked if she'd like to talk. Turned out she was in love with a married man, and he'd rejected her. So I told her a little story, which made her troubles seem nothing, and she said she felt better. It's like all psychology, you've got to be a bit hard, as well as being nice. In this job people tell you things they wouldn't tell their friends, because they won't see you again. It's a funny situation, being on a train together.'

This South Africa

☐ 'In our actuality programmes we're covering the opening of the Transport Museum in Heidelberg, the Miss Army competition, an interview with the retiring commissioner of the Red Cross, the effects of the rise in the price of petrol. We do have some controversial material – we had a feature on the use of ordinary water instead of distilled water in car batteries, and we had an item on the failure to use Afrikaans in five-star hotels.' – South African TV executive quoted in the *Listener* (Conor Magill)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

First Person

Arthur Marshall

Curtain Up

Loyal readers of this column will, in their tolerant way, have grown accustomed to receiving up-to-the-minute information about my section of Devon rural life with its varied warp and woof. That church fête which netted £108 for repairs to the roof. The arrival of weekly bingo in the village hall ('Tch, tch!' from some). The day when one of Mr Brickman's vast cows, reaching eagerly for who knows what tit-bit, overbalanced and fell through the hedge into my orchard. And so on. The Bultitudes, incidentally, went to Ibiza ('Where be that?') for their summer hols and are the talk of the village.

And now this loyalty is to be repaid by tidings of an altogether wider and more interesting kind and from beyond, of all things, the Iron Curtain. Permission has been sought by a kind Mr Dubrovsky to reprint in a Russian magazine a piece I wrote for these pages called 'Royal Mail', which fancifully featured a mother's request to the Queen for her daughter to be allowed to use the Buckingham Palace hard tennis-court. The request was courteously refused. The magazine is called *Foreign Literature* and Mr Dubrovsky writes from Pushkin Square, which must be in the very heart of Moscow (no postal code, I note). Without so much as mentioning the vulgar subject of roubles, I shall gladly give permission, only hoping that the magazine's readers will realise, which I rather doubt, that the whole thing was intended as a jolly jokeski.

My acquaintance with Russians has been both rich and rare. As an undergraduate, I was assistant stage-manager for an amateur Cambridge production of *The Soldier's Tale*, amateur but for one very notable exception. The wife of Maynard Keynes of King's, recently retired from the Russian Ballet, was persuaded to re-emerge and dance again. Her name was Lydia Lopokova and she had been the Tsar's favourite ballerina. She was supremely brilliant and workmanlike and entirely enchanting. She rehearsed uncomplainingly for hours on end.

It was surprising to find how nervous she was. We were in a small theatre that seated 250 people but her stage-fright was Bolshoi-size. Waiting in the wings, she would suddenly flutter away, disappear and return, smoothing her *tutu*. 'I had to pass a little nervous water,' she explained ('Very Russian,' we said to each other in our prim undergraduate manner).

My second Russian acquaintance was also a dancer. This was pre-war in the South of France when friends of friends brought along one day Serge Lifar, holidaying nearby. He, in his turn, had been Diaghilev's favourite. After dinner it was hinted to him that if he cared to hop a little, it would be highly acceptable. He would and did (it is always the best performers who make the least fuss about unsuitable conditions). We had an excellent pianist and Lifar danced *L'après-midi d'un faune*. We also had the grapes necessary for the dance, real ones and rather over-ripe, which plopped singly to the carpet and made a mess. We also, alas, had a rather foolish woman with us. Lifar said he would dance again, but after a short rest. He was not tired, he said, but had to get out of one mood into another. 'Oh, I see,' she said, in dreadful, rattling English tones, 'you haven't got your second wind yet.' Lifar didn't understand and so she burst into French, mouthing elaborately as though to a deaf nonagenarian: *'Vous n'avez pas obtenu votre deuxième vent.'* He was polite enough to smile.

My only other Russian acquaintance was of a very different kind and I met him on a vast and expensive sea-going yacht in Flensburg harbour in May 1945. The war had been over a mere five days and parties of British and Russian officers had been dispatched to the surrendered German high command to request information on this and that (as a German speaker, I had to try to discover where Himmler was, but they knew as little of him as we did). We were billeted on the yacht, which had been Hitler's, and various German generals were summoned in turn for interrogation. Going ashore, it was a weird experience to meet beefy Field Marshal Jodl, still clutching his baton of office, striding alone along the quay towards the yacht. Courtesies were exchanged. I saluted. He touched his cap with the baton. The same with Keitel. They appeared quite unshaken by what had happened and one could but admire their bearing.

We had our meals communally in the yacht's large saloon. Down one end of it a dozen or so German submarine officers were attending a course on torpedoes. Being German, the course continued because nobody had yet told it to stop. Half way up the saloon stood a bust of Hitler. I found myself munching next to a Russian officer, name unknown but I thought of him as Boris. I attempted conversation. 'What heavenly weather!' No answer. *'Quel beau temps!'* Nothing. The German language was an equal frost. For breakfast, one morning, porridge appeared. Boris stared at it nonplussed, as well he might be, and then, seizing a knife, he smeared it on a hunk of bread and got it down. 'Well done,' I said, but I might as well have addressed the ceiling.

And then, a day or two later, something rather bizarre happened. We were having lunch ('Another scorcher!' I had tried, but Boris wasn't having any) when two German workmen entered bearing a very large saw. They advanced to the bust of Hitler and started sawing off the head. One hardly knew where to look. The German submariners gazed at their plates. All conversation stopped while we ate silently on. The sawing took some time but eventually Hitler's head crashed to the deck with a loud bang. The workmen briskly gathered it up and exited. Our embarrassed silence was broken by Boris. His shrieks of happy laughter rang loudly out. He found it the merriest treat in years. He banged me on the back, jabbering away like mad. He grasped my hand and shook it. He thumped the table. He brought out vodka and we drank a toast. From then on we were friends.

But that, sadly, is all, though my TV licence renewal form reminds me, oddly enough, of Russia. This strange three-sectioned document bears an almost hysterical plea: DO NOT BEND COUNTERFOIL; and whatever would happen if one did? It lists endless things that I must not do, with or without my TV. It tells me how to pay and where. It bears at the bottom a figure composed, and I do not exaggerate, of 38 numbers and about three inches long. But, exhausted by all this activity, it gives up when it comes to my name. All it can gasp out is the word 'Marsha', and it's 'Marsha' here and 'Marsha' there. Wasn't this, more or less, the name of that doleful character in *The Seagull* who slopped about all day in black announcing that she was in mourning for her life? Thanks very much.

Roger Woddis

Post Mortem

Among the arsenal of new weapons being discussed at the Geneva Disarmament Conference is an 'ethnic destroyer' that detects enemies by their smell.

Two dying historians lay
Beneath the burnt stump of a tree,
Not passing the time of day
But pondering World War Three.

Said one as he stroked his chin,
'It's only a theory, I know,
But we couldn't hope to win,
Considering our B.O.

'The race was not to the swift,
The battle was not to the strong,
But to the device that sniffed
A contradistinctive pong.

'We're not like the Indians or French,
Who bathe as a matter of course.'
His colleague said: 'What of the stench
Of garlic and curry and horse?'

They wrangled and argued for hours
Until night and nemesis fell,
Assessing the various powers
And which had the sweetest smell.

Historians never agree,
And these with their ultimate breath
Beneath the burnt stump of a tree
Went arguing to their death.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editor

The Critic as Vandal

Sir, It must have come as a surprise to those who, like me, have read and admired John Carey's books of literary criticism, to find him inaugurating his Merton professorship ('The Critic As Vandal', NS 6 August) with so vehement an attack on the critics who 'destroy English literature'. The surprise is not so much that he chooses such eminent figures of 20th-century criticism (it is, after all, one of his favourite pastimes), but that it is a practice of which, to apply his standards to his own work, he is also guilty. I cannot say whether he still holds the views that he propagated so entertainingly in his recent works such as *The Violent Effigy* on Dickens and *Milton*, but I assume that a man does not change his views so quickly and so drastically as he appears to have done.

He has already mentioned four reasons for destroying literature, as exemplified in Empson, Lewis, Ricks and Kerrigan. May I presume to add a fifth reason – the desire to prove oneself superior to the author in question? Professor Carey, in his introduction to the Dickens book, proclaims that it is very easy for a critic to assert his superiority to Dickens and to make Dickens look bumbling and hamfisted. He then goes on to do just that. When Agnes is imagined by David Copperfield as pointing ever upward, Carey slips in a joke about the direction of Agnes's finger being upstairs to the bedroom. This makes mock of Dickens's intention by rewriting the passage in exactly the way Professor Carey would apparently have us avoid, putting into our minds a meaning which 'no reader in his senses could have thought of unaided'.

This sort of criticism reaches its greatest proportions in his book on Milton. The section on *Lycidas* resembles nothing so much as an attempt to 'destroy' a poem. '"Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more",' quips Carey, 'would have the stoniest shepherd reaching for his handkerchief', which is all very amusing, but which has nothing to do with the poem: he has translated the language of Milton into the language of Wodehouse or Runyon – not a bad language *per se*, but why translate it at all? Isn't Milton good enough? It is as blatant a piece of 'rewording' as the example he quotes from C. S. Lewis, and, given the same standards of judgment, just as unnecessary. Again, Carey's comment upon 'Blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a sheep-hook' is: 'Would even an incompetent shepherd hold one in his mouth?'

To find examples of 'vandalism' one does not have to look so hard (or so unjustly) at 'the most important seminal work in English criticism this century' – one can find it on our own doorsteps. Isn't Professor Carey in fact his own vandal?

CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS

20a Topsfield Parade
London N8

Sir, John Carey says that I destructively 'substituted' the word 'genocide' for 200 lines at the end of *Samson Agonistes*. But I was addressing myself directly to the announcement, by a respected critic, that you weren't to let the destruction of the Philistines engage your conscience at all: 'It is the will of Jehovah that the enemies of Israel should be wiped out, men, women, servants, and cattle. In their destruction the reader must feel nothing but satisfaction. This is the one concession which must be taken over from the ancient legend, like the mythical elements common in the plots of Greek tragedy. These are among the conditions "given", under which the author must work and which the reader must accept.'

Against which I said at once: 'But elements of a plot are different in kind from moral judgments. There are limits to what a *donnée* in great literature can be asked to encompass, and genocide is beyond them. Perhaps *Samson Agonistes* does indeed persuade us that we are right to feel satisfaction – but that is different from not even being under any obligation to persuade us.'

I still believe that 'genocide' is a reasonable paraphrase of the specific sentence which I was repudiating: 'It is the will of Jehovah that the enemies of Israel should be wiped out, men, women, servants, and cattle.' Professor Carey's imperturbable dealings with the play I find no less evacuating in their professionalised conscience lessness.

CHRISTOPHER RICKS

Christ's College
Cambridge

Sir, I was intrigued to read Professor Empson's reply last week to Professor Carey's article of the previous week. The main point of the Professor's very stimulating piece was that to paraphrase a piece of literature is, at least potentially, an act of vandalism.

Professor Empson then answers this by writing a letter which includes a 62-word paraphrase of the poet's build-up to the contested verse. This is followed by a 168-word passage, containing 44 words of paraphrase and 124 words of explanation for this paraphrase. This latter passage refers to 36 syllables of actual poetry. The whole is prefaced by 111 words justifying the content of the original paraphrase of ten syllables of verse included in the already-mentioned 36.

Why does Professor Empson do this? Clearly to reply to an attack on the practice of paraphrase, by expanding and augmenting the very paraphrase at issue, is logically absurd. Professor Empson is surely presenting us with another of his riddles here. He is saying in effect: 'Let me not paraphrase thee if I paraphrase thee not' – in other words, subjecting himself to a brilliant lampoon. I can see no other way to make sense of this part of his letter. Since nothing can be more damning to to a critic than such patent absurdity in his writing, Professor Empson is obviously saying, in his affable way: 'Damn me if I don't write a load of old rubbish at times': though I am sure that this is a phrase he would not use himself, even in conversation.

I submit this fresh, original, spontaneous, perverse and totally spurious interpretation as an example of the kind of mental trapeze-act without the trapeze, which thousands of English literature students are now encouraged and indeed required to perform, in order to gain their examination certificates.

In short, I think it is high time Professor Empson's critical approach went out of fashion, for a few decades at least. But this is not the same thing as calling him dishonest. Professor Carey had no right to do this, and should make amends in print, or whatever critics do.

CHRIS ROBINSON

50 Saddler Street
Durham City

Sir, Who in the world would want to argue basically with John Carey in his anguish over literary vandalism, of any sort? But is 'editing' vandalism? Is it quite fair to equate Dryden as 'editor' of Shakespeare (or of Milton), however poor an editor, with Coleridge as critic of matters in general, about which it is as easy to be as right as Mr Carey himself is about literary 'vandalism' in general? Dryden *was* by way of being an artist too in his editing. Wouldn't one say Shakespeare improved on *his* literary originals in *his* 'editing'?

Where does 'criticism' end and 'editing' begin? Put Mr Carey's instances aside for the moment; are there not writers who profit from *critical editing*? Put aside the case of Thomas Wolfe and Maxwell Perkins. Might not Faulkner and Hemingway have profited, might *we* not have done so (Mr Carey and those who share his seriousness), if Faulkner and Hemingway continued to be handled by their editors as Dryden advised? The younger, un-Nobel-ed Faulkner was heavily edited, to his clear advantage and, I daresay, to ours. Wasn't Coleridge himself 'critically' helped now and then by thoughtful, sympathetic 'editing'? And Mr Eliot? *Et al.*

Nonsense and vandalism must be identified. But literary vulgarity hardly calls for a countervailing superciliousness. Writers, critics, editors, scholars, professors are human and need help always at some point. The professionals among them acknowledge help. Empson and Dryden were always modulating, even reversing critical propositions. Professors vandalise as readily as critics, as Mr Carey demonstrated.

How does 'professoring' differ in occupational pitfalls from 'criticising' or 'editing'? Only creative writing is apart, for the artist makes drafts and sometimes does not have the chance, or the taste at the moment, to erase or reshape an infelicity. I suspect that only professors hold themselves to sterner standards of instantly achieved perfection.

If Shakespeare had not written so much so indifferently, he would not have written so much so magnificently. Our task is to continue to study the art of our artists rather than to expend energies on inartistic if earnest critics, editors, or professors, who may never have known or guessed what it is to try to make art, or to respond to it. Fools should not be suffered at all.

MORRIS FREEDMAN
Professor of English
University of Maryland

The Tower Hotel
St Katharine's Way
London E1

Forty Years On

Sir, Mr Pimlott's study of the Left Book Club 40 years ago (NS 6 August) is an excellent and objective account of a complex social and political phenomenon which developed as a result of the British (and French) government policy of non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War. Against this selfish and unsuccessful policy, which did not avert World War II, Victor Gollancz brilliantly mobilised in the *LBC* no fewer than 60,000 anti-fascist activists and innumerable others who read the *LBC* publications. The *LBC* failed, as Mr Pimlott points out, because the guiding philosophy of the *LBC* was communist, as it was of Gollancz himself until late in 1938, when he saw the writing on the wall – the Nazi-Soviet pact, the end of European dominance and the rise of the USA and the USSR to world leadership.

Against Gollancz, a Goliath of publishing, was pitted a feeble and inexperienced publisher in his very first year of activity – myself. With the aid of Lord (then Fenner) Brockway I published a series of some 30 non-communist and, for the most part, second-rate Leftish books, which led to my being labelled Trotskyist and attacked as 'a malignant viper'. From these books I derived some satisfaction, partly because I had myself caught a touch of Trotskyist 'flu, but also because I had acquired at least some books to publish, a vital necessity for a publisher in his infancy. But I also ac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quired one of the few great writers of that day, George Orwell, himself reviled as a Trotskyist after the publication of *Homage to Catalonia*. Without him my firm would undoubtedly have collapsed in the late 1940s. Political feeling blazed fiercely in those days, as it has never done since, for at that time Britain, with France, was at the centre point of destiny and in 1940, after France fell, she stood alone. But that is another story.

F. J. WARBURG

Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd
14 Carlisle Street, W1

Sir, If the letter from John Peet in last week's issue causes Ben Pimlott to think again before issuing in book form his remarks about British volunteers to the Spanish Civil War, it is perhaps not too much to hope that he will also reconsider some of his statements about the Left Book Club, its influence and the conditions in which it worked. As, for instance:

(1) He says it was 'autocratic' and not amenable to any suggestions for rank-and-file control. Well, of course. It was a *publishing* venture; and the publisher had to have the last word on what was saleable and what not. Gollancz, like other publishers, sought and received advice, and sometimes took it. But you can't run a publishing business by votes of handfuls of eager amateurs; and nobody ever thought you could. Left Book Circles and Groups, in my recollection, ran themselves pretty much as they pleased.

(2) He criticises heavily the club's output, mentioning a few exceptional authors without giving the titles of their Left Books. He does not distinguish as he should 'choices', of which there was one each month, from the rest of its publications. Of course, the books, taken as a whole, had a left-wing bias – what else was the club's purpose? – but they were by no means as heavy going, either in format or in content, as the club's periodical *Review*, which was indeed an unattractive production and, I would agree, went largely unread. Incidentally, it is not true to say that John Strachey was 'the most prolific and widely read of the club's authors and pamphleteers'. Pimlott would do well to consult records, and compare the publications of John Strachey with those of Harold Laski and G. D. H. Cole, to take two names only.

It is, of course, true that the direct influence of the Left Book Club (and of Strachey himself) on the Left generally began to wane after the Nazi-Soviet pact and Strachey's second large change of political allegiance. But the argument that the club's publications had little to do with the change of mood which produced the election results of 1945 is nonsense. Even before the war the official Labour Party was sufficiently perturbed by the success of the club books to start a rival 'Labour Book Service' on its own; and the mass of facts and figures about pre-war conditions which the club issued in many publications played a large part in *conditioning* the minds of so many against those conditions being allowed to return. The club, unlike some other organisations, did not lay down a host of policies for adoption by the Labour Party – as did the ILP before 1931; but by getting proposals discussed over a wide area it made sure that Labour Party leaders thought about post-war questions before the war was over, and went into the election with a known programme.

MARGARET COLE

4 Ashdown
Clevelands, London W13

Missing In Chile

Sir, I write, as a Chilean postgraduate student enjoying the hospitality of Britain, to ask your help. My uncle, Carlos Godoy, a doctor, aged 39, with three children, disappeared on 4 August on his way to his clinic in Santiago. We, his family, fear that he will be found dead, as was a friend of ours two weeks ago. My father Redro Godoy (who is in France) and I would like the circumstances to be known publicly in the hope that such publicity will make it more difficult for the Chilean authorities to say afterwards that they have no idea what happened to him.

My uncle had been a communist and under the Allende Government was in charge of rural medicine in the public health service. Under Pinochet he lost his administrative post and has been working for over two years as a doctor in a health centre run by nuns in a suburb of Santiago. During this time he has not been politically active. We are very much afraid that he will not be seen alive again unless the Chilean authorities become aware that the outside world is interested in his fate.

RAMIRE GODOY

London SW7

Flawed Vision

Sir, I do not wish to argue about a critic's reactions to a piece of work, dramatic, literary or otherwise, nor about his right to them. But I feel that what he must get right first is the true content, in terms of plot where a play is involved, of the piece criticised. Your theatre critic Craig Raine's review of my play *AND* (NS 13 August) is false in that he presents it as a debate, to use his own words, on 'the morality of violence as an admissible reaction to oppression. Speaking for the motion are two coal miners on the run for murder; speaking against is a Jewish pedlar on the run from murder'.

The *whole* truth about this particular point (one among numerous others in the play which C. Raine doesn't see fit to mention probably because he couldn't see them at all) is that the Jew seeks not to oppose the use of violence against oppression but to understand the morality involved in each act of 'active' resistance to oppression, that is to explore and try to define the differences between those acts of anti-oppressive violence which are sick and immoral and those which are on the contrary healthy and moral. A search well worth making and indeed acutely necessary in today's world!

Furthermore the Jew, in the dramatic progression of the play, does not end up as a resigned victim to oppression which he is in the beginning but self-evolves to a complete renunciation of his conditioned 'acceptance' and passivity. That Craig Raine did not comprehend, let alone see, this was not because it wasn't there; nor was it the fault of either the acting or the writing but, I am convinced, of the obvious inner inability and dialectical sterility which prevents him, and many other so-called critics in this country, from being aware of such psychological and social/political realities.

ALAN PASSES

50 Hamilton Road, SW19

Adventures in Theatreland

Sir, I congratulate A. J. P. Taylor (London Diary, 13 August) on his escape from the surrealistic tricks of the National Theatre. I too, am a survivor. Coming up the stairs to the circle, and entering the great amorphous concourse with its shadows and half-lights, my friends were immediately swallowed up, and I was alone among strangers drifting in a vast Brownian Movement. Powerful electronic instruments maintained a ruthless throbbing that drove me early into the auditorium, and the rather lesser sound of Irish pipes. Returning to the concourse at the interval, my feet sank and slithered in the thick floor-covering, finding no firm ground beneath. The whole building seemed to sway, and I had to sink into a chair to get enough steadiness to eat an ice cream.

A. J. P. Taylor was fortunate actually to locate the loo. I was too shaken to try to rediscover the elusive notice that had leapt to the eye earlier in the evening. Anyway, it became my considered opinion that the loo, the bar and other possible objectives changed their places as soon as one turned one's back on them.

D. M. PULSFORD

39a Vesta Avenue
St Albans, Herts.

Misplaced Blame

Sir, D. S. Locke's heartrending story, 'Czechoslovakia's Drab Anniversary', (NS 13 August), suffered from one near-fatal error: the 'vulgar ostentation of their [the Masaryks'] communist successors' mausoleum at Zizkov' was not built by the communists but by Masaryk's first republic to inter the mortal remains of the Hussite general and hero, Jan Zizka of Trocnov. It was there in 1935-38 when I lived in Prague. Though it is true that Jan Zizka cannot be held responsible for the remains of the first communist president of Czechoslavakia, Klement Gottwald, having been buried there too – in this tasteless temple of revolutionary Hussitism, created in the Twenties of this century.

HENRY HELLMAN

60 Woodland Rise
London N10

Pocket Calculator

Sir, It seems churlishly pedantic to cavil at Mary Wilson's arithmetic but I feel that her proposition that the door of No 10 gets opened an average of 942 times per day cannot be allowed to pass into history unchallenged. Allowing for it to be closed for a mere six hours at night, any desiccated calculating machine shows that to achieve a score of 942 the poor doorman would have to be opening and closing the damn thing 52 times an hour i.e. almost once every minute for 18 hours solid!

I find this statistic extremely hard to swallow. But, if true, surely the sensible and kindly thing would be to retire the doorman and install one of those nice old-fashioned departmental-store revolving doors?

WINSTON FLETCHER

Souldern Mill
Bicester, Oxfordshire

One Man's Meat

Sir, I find it absolutely extraordinary that Nick Enright should have won your Weekend Comp. (NS 13 August) for the most revolting menu. I am a good cook and considered to have civilised and sophisticated tastes in food, and I found that his rhymed dishes, with the exception of rollmops with custard and spaghetti marmalade, sounded almost mouthwatering. Gingerbread with honey and Stilton, for instance, might be quite interesting; I wouldn't mind sampling it. And what's wrong with cabbage juice? Very nutritious I should think; I drink cabbage water myself and while it's hardly delicious, it doesn't make me retch. As for poached eggs vinaigrette, Nick Enright has to be joking. A combination of poached eggs and vinegar is a culinary commonplace; there are dozens of such recipes strewn throughout my cookery books. Eggs Benedict, for instance.

The fact that my own menu, of greatly superior revoltingness (revulsion doesn't sound right) was unplaced has absolutely nothing to do with the case.

NINA WATKINS

73b Kingsdown Road
London N19

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & ARTS

Wilfred Beckerman

The Pursuit of Happiness

The Joyless Economy by TIBOR SCITOVSKY *Oxford* £4.95
The American Economy: Income, Wealth and Want by STANLEY LEBERGOTT *Princeton* £12.20
The Survival of Capitalism by HENRI LEFEBVRE *Allison & Busby* £5.25 and £2.95
Choices for the Japanese Economy by HIROSHI KITAMURA *Royal Institute of International Affairs* £7.00

Six years ago 43 per cent of a sample of people surveyed in the US said that they were 'very happy'. This figure is exactly the same as in a similar survey carried out in 1948, although average incomes had considerably risen over this period. 'Happiness' reached a peak, apparently, in 1957, when 53 per cent reported that they were 'very happy', even though unemployment in the US that year was relatively high. (Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the 1957 survey was carried out in March, when spring was in the air, whereas the 1970 survey was carried out in December, when everybody was worried about how to find the money to buy each other unwanted Christmas presents.)

Surveys comparing 'happiness' in 19 different countries at very different income levels also show little relation to average incomes per head in the countries concerned, or to recent growth rates. This would seem to substantiate the oldest platitude known to mankind – the one that is known even to people who don't know any other – namely that 'money doesn't bring happiness'.

On the other hand, in any given community at any given point of time, it appears that there is, after all, some connection between individuals' incomes and awareness of their state of well-being. For example, a recent survey in the US showed that the percentage of people reporting that they were 'very happy' rose steadily from about 20 per cent for people earning less than $1,000 per annum to 53 per cent in the income group $15,000 per annum. This, and other, fascinating statistical findings are presented, in the context of a stimulating and imaginative discussion, in Tibor Scitovsky's *The Joyless Economy*.

Scitovsky documents in some detail what has been suspected for a very long time by most Europeans who visit the US. This is that the US economy in no way illustrates the fact that a high standard of living does not bring happiness, since the standard of living in the US is not high to begin with. Even in the late Fifties, and in the relatively cosmopolitan East-Coast cities, it was clear that, for example, most middle-income Americans wore uniform, badly-cut clothes; ate tasteless food; had very short vacations by European standards; suffered from an over-commercialised health service; and were generally deprived of other private sector amenities – in addition to the well-known squalor of much of their public sector services, as was forcefully pointed out by Galbraith.

Like many commentators, Scitovsky attributes the relative drabness and absence of joie de vivre in the US to the country's 'Puritan ghost'. The Puritan ethic valued production, not consumption, which was only necessary up to a point in order to keep production going:

> The frugality and worldly ascetism of puritanism, its disapproval of spending on superfluities, cultural goods, and just about anything beyond the necessities of a plain and sober life, could not have been better calculated to deprive of prestige the task of housekeeping and the spending of money, along with cultural interests, aesthetic values, and all concern with the enjoyment of the good things of life.

Such a tradition looks up to the earning of money but not its spending, so that little importance is attached to 'consumption skills', whether they be basic consumption skills such as those involved in preparing and enjoying good food, or more sophisticated consumption skills, such as those that might be required for the enjoyment of certain forms of music, art or literature. It is only production skills that matter in the US, unlike most European countries which cultivate both production and consumption skills, or Britain where we cultivate neither.

According to Scitovsky, Americans are unduly concerned with finding ways of economising in time, given that they then don't know what to do with the extra leisure. Consequently, too many people spend it watching the TV, even though they are thoroughly bored with the programmes. Scitovsky refers to a survey of TV viewers in the US in which about 40 per cent replied that they were not enjoying the programmes and would rather be doing something else but couldn't tear themselves away – i.e., they had become compulsive viewers.

Of course, this sort of lamentation over the failure of high material output to provide greater satisfactions does not apply to all sections of American society. In some respects, prosperity has had a favourable impact on the quality as well as the quantity of American intellectual life. America is increasingly becoming the world's cultural centre partly as a result of the – until recently, at any rate – financial drawing power of American universities, museums, research institutes, and so on. At the other end of the spectrum the persistence of a substantial class of people in poverty in the US makes a mockery of any obsessive concern with the failure of the wealthy to find happiness.

Stanley Lebergott, in *The American Economy*, purports to examine this and related aspects of American prosperity in more detail, but he makes a bad job of it. Sometimes the detail is duplicated (e.g., the table on page 102 is repeated on page 261); sometimes key data are ignored while we are bombarded with a miscellaneous collection of interesting, but barely relevant, bits of data and technical explanation that resemble the notes for some research student's doctoral thesis. For example, Professor Lebergott provides some telling facts about different aspects of income distribution in general and, in particular, on the decline in the total US population below the *official* 'poverty line' over the last two decades. But since this line is kept constant in absolute terms (i.e., it is adjusted only for changes in the cost of living), and since, as Professor Lebergott is clearly aware, any useful concept of poverty needs to be in terms of *relative* deprivation, it would have been more to the point if he had discussed the extraordinary stability in the proportion of the population below a poverty line defined in relation to average income. For it happens that if one takes some *relative* poverty concept – such as half of the average (median) per capita income – the proportion of the American population below this line has remained at 19 per cent since 1947.

The failure of economic growth to eradicate widespread poverty might have been expected to form a prominent part of the latest book on the evils of capitalism produced by the French Marxist sociologist, Henri Lefebvre, *The Survival of Capitalism*. But this would have required facts; and by comparison with Lebergott, Professor Lefebvre goes to the opposite extreme: neither facts nor any coherent theoretical argument, just rhetoric. Indeed, one has the impression that this book is a taped and un-edited version of a series of free association sessions, at which the author says the first thing that comes into his mind. At one point, he has some harsh words to say about the way economic growth is conceived by economists, in the course of which he combines breathtaking non sequiturs with astronomic ignorance of what economic theory really does have to say about economic growth (which is hardly anything of any use). But one need not be a professional psychiatrist to diagnose Professor Lefebvre's problems; it is a clear case of 'the Galbraith syndrome'. He seems to hate J. K. Galbraith, presumably because he resembles some demon figure from his childhood, although the more immediate reason appears to be that, unlike Lefebvre, Galbraith has actually become internationally famous through having been one of the first people to produce a persuasive and perceptive critique of modern growth-orientated society. He complains that 'on the basis of this paltry handful of critical comments, Galbraith is considered a genius' (a slight exaggeration), and even protests that President Giscard d'Estaing invited Galbraith to a conference on the limits to growth instead of inviting Vance Packard. (He didn't invite me either for that matter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but I am sure that was just an administrative oversight and not a deliberate affront.)

A fourth recent addition to the flood of books on what is wrong with present societies in spite of our affluence – or because of it – is Hiroshi Kitamura's *Choices for the Japanese Economy*. The study of Japan could, in principle, provide the magic key to unlock some of the mysteries of the relationship between economic growth and social – as distinct from economic – forces. For one of the questions that is never posed in the Scitovsky sort of lament over the failure of economic growth to make everybody happy is whether happiness is the primary objective of existence anyway. In Camus's *Caligula* there is a crucial discussion between the Emperor, who seeks to pursue to its logical conclusion his own views on the arbitrariness and absurdity of a world devoid of any clear moral imperatives, and the courtier, Cherea, who takes a stand on the proposition that some actions are more admirable than others given the universal fact that all men simply want to live and to be happy. This may be a self-evident truth in Western society, but is it true of societies with very different cultural and historical backgrounds? For example, in her classic study of Japanese society, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, the social anthropologist Ruth Benedict argues that the notion that happiness should be the over-riding objective of individuals or society would appear both astonishing and repugnant to the Japanese. For them the fulfilment of one's duty to various groups in society – such as the family or the firm – is what really matters.

Such an underlying motivation would help explain Japanese economic performance to some extent but does not explain why the Japanese have been prepared to sacrifice the 'quality of life' in the interests of growth. One might have expected from its title that Professor Kitamura's book would have at least shed some light on the extent to which this assumption is valid, if not its underlying explanation. After all, the Japanese National Economic Council has published estimates showing that the loss of 'measurable economic welfare' caused by environmental pollution in Japan can be evaluated at about one sixth of GNP (compared with only about 1 per cent in the US). Unfortunately Professor Kitamura does not even collect together the easily available information on the welfare costs of economic growth in Japan, let alone add to it. He limits himself to some vague, but no doubt very sensible, generalisations about the 'market failures' in Japan, such as environmental pollution, urban congestion, an excessive share of investment in GNP, and inadequate public sector and welfare programmes, and he then concentrates on a rather standard, if thoroughly competent, economic appraisal of the medium term growth prospects of the type one would associate with an official Green Paper.

But we can all do that sort of stuff and it would have been far more interesting to have had Professor Kitamura's views on how far some of the social pressures that are common to other industrialised countries will eventually force a slowing down in the Japanese growth rate. For example, how far will the downward trend in the share of wages in Japanese national income (and the low share of consumption in total use of resources) be reversed as a result of egalitarian pressures that seem to be common to all other industrialised countries? Another interesting aspect of Japanese economic growth (according to some estimates made by Angus Maddison of the OECD – not Professor Kitamura) is that, allowing for holidays, Japanese annual working hours are the longest of any industrial country and have fallen less over the last 20 years than any other industrialised country (British hours have also fallen remarkably little compared to other European countries but we have the advantage of being able to take our leisure during working hours). However, in its recent study of 'Measurable Economic Welfare', the Japanese National Economic Council revealed that the respect for hard work felt by the older generations in Japan falls off steadily as one moves down to the younger age groups. This suggests that the pressures for a reduction in the duration and intensity of work will inevitably increase. So Japanese economic growth might slow down after all, in which case they, too, would encounter the problem posed by Scitovsky – how to ensure that people are able to take advantage of their greater leisure time.

A recent well-known study of 'measurable economic welfare' in the US (by Nordhaus and Tobin) showed that the increase in leisure had added a great deal to measurable economic welfare, but their estimates were based on the assumption that leisure hours could be valued at the going wage rate. If Scitovsky is right about Americans (on the whole) not knowing how to use their leisure, this valuation would obviously be excessive. On the other hand, some commentators argue that leisure time is becoming more precious on account of the increase in all the opportunities – such as those provided by the increased output of leisure goods – to enjoy leisure time. If we didn't have hi-fi equipment and the TV and automobiles we would not feel so keenly the need to spend time using the things. In other words, increased material output creates new 'needs', and we are perpetually falling behind in the race against time to satisfy these new needs. So people save time in undesirable ways; they have little time to talk to their children and even the seduction of members of the opposite sex has had to be speeded up.

This is one of the dilemmas of any policy to educate people to acquire 'consumption skills'. For on the face of it, it would seem that society should pay far more attention to cultivating these skills instead of relying on educating people to be efficient cogs in the productive machine (as with some of the manpower planning doctrines – expounded, for example, by Lord Crowther-Hunt – that have become popular again lately). But if this makes people increasingly dissatisfied with their inability to satisfy their newly acquired – and artificial – needs, are we any better off? This is, of course, a philosophical problem, not an economic one, and there can be no objective answer to it any more than there can be any objective scientific answer to the question of whether economic growth makes people happier or not. In the end, one is tempted to fall back on the position taken by Sir Arthur Lewis in a masterly book on economic growth written over 20 years ago, namely that the case for economic growth is not that it makes people happier but that it increases their choice. As Professor Lefebvre rightly stated in an earlier book (which he seems to have forgotten), 'the more man has needs, the more he exists; the more choice he has the more he is free'.

Lorna Sage

Hard Times

Women in the Shadows by ANN CORNELISEN
Macmillan £4.95

Ann Cornelisen is a disillusioned do-gooder. After working ten years for the Save the Children Fund in southern Italy, she allowed herself to admit that she and all the others who had descended on the subsistence villages of the Abruzzo and Lucania were making absurdly little difference to the lives of the peasant population. In Miss Cornelisen's case, the realisation went a stage further: she became herself inwardly infected with something of the stubborn inertia of the people she'd been living among, and discovered a new kind of function – not to explain the outside world to them, but to present them to the outside world.

Women in the Shadows is her second documentary about this region and, as you'd expect from her rueful, repentant tone, it's anti-sociological, anti-statistical: simply an attempt to describe the lives of particular women she knew well, without turning them into representative types or fictional characters. She has, she says, changed their names, though even that basic precaution has a weary irony about it, because 'Teresa', 'Peppina', 'Cettina' and the rest will probably remain as untouched by the existence of a book about them as they do by the official reports and surveys.

The point, anyway, is not to anatomise them – that's easily done with people whose poverty leaves them little defence against social investigators – but rather to identify those qualities that resist dissection. You might assume she'd chosen the women as the worst victims of prejudice and scarcity; however (though they are all maimed and worn out by early marriage, too many pregnancies, amateurish abortions and sheer hard work), the women are, in Miss Cornelisen's view, much more personally resilient, individual and self-possessed than the men. The husbands who appear on the fringes of her narrative are demoralised, hopeless figures, 'inadequate and bitter', forced into a kind of dreamy half-life by the combination of unemployment at home and unskilled, dispensable labour in the north of Italy or in Germany, where they are regarded as little better than animals. They

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are, perforce, absent much of the year and even when they are at home they seem lost in compensatory myths of their potency and sexual prowess, which the women indulge without conviction (apparently the highest sexual compliment a husband gets paid is that he's '*valente, valente*', i.e., quick about it). Merely by remaining behind to cope day after day with work in the fields or domestic drudgery for some 'Signora', and scavenging for whatever welfare and charity pickings there are, the women become more coherent, realistic people. If these regions have a voice of their own, they provide it: Miss Cornelisen's first study, Peppina, is a good example. 'If she were going to talk about herself, she always shrugged and began, "What can you expect? *Nothing*!" '

Not lovable women, and not very picturesque either. Physically they're 'lumpy' and neglected, bundled into shapeless tatty garments; if they are ever pretty their looks rapidly get lost in children and anxiety. The photographs that back up the text show it happening, and catch too the habitual expression of dull suspicion and calculation that screws up their faces. Each is an egotist (if you count the family as an aspect of ego), generous only in the ways custom demands for co-existence with the neighbours. They enjoy each others' misfortunes in 'the sneering, picking way of people who are born together and are apt to die together'. When they're not working they gossip, backbite and fight. Ann Cornelisen must be a remarkable woman to have got as close to them as she did, when she might have been expected to attract malice rather than confidence – she aged over the years so much more slowly than they did, for instance, no prolapse or missing teeth ('Why hasn't that happened to you, signora?'). However, as she points out, it was impossible to live in those places without sharing many of the external deprivations – the fact that the aqueduct ran only for a few hours a day, that the electrical current was too weak and intermittent to power appliances or even provide reading light, that the only goods in the shops were of poor quality, with almost no fresh meat or fish. So that what money could buy was pretty limited, certainly not (unless you left altogether) much alleviation of the isolation and sameness of life which made her bad company at parties in Rome and brought her closer to her subjects: 'The slow repetition of those days created a sense of inner isolation that I have never entirely lost.'

What emerges, despite the monotonous deprivation, is a series of portraits of abrasive, capable, even witty women, who have managed their lives in very various ways – Ninetta, whose eloquence in rows awakened the 'cannibalistic malice' of a whole neighbourhood, and whose son was born without a penis (to the delight of the pious gossips); she, though, assuaged her own fury and guilt by getting for him the operations he needed, and even taking him to Germany without passports, turning a grotesque misfortune into a piece of local heroism. Or Teresa, outwardly resigned but privately having the measure of the teachers, priests, nuns and doctors who ruled the village:

> She would stick out her stomach and waddle round the room, wringing her hands, intoning, 'Ah, my children, my poor children. I feel for you. Never fear, God will provide. *He* will provide. Don't ask me, I am but His humble servant. Ah, my poor children, my poor children!' She would stop, put her hands on her hips and say in a dead voice, 'Sure, "My poor children", but make *sure* your parents vote the right way!'

Their protests are not effective in public ways – Teresa's husband began as a communist and a trouble-maker, but was bought off in the usual way with a new house and land from the Land Reform, and became a mere windbag. The importance of the kinds of strategies Miss Cornelisen shows the women using is that they preserve some mental independence, and some private space. They win small victories against the bureaucracy, while acknowledging overall defeat.

Education was (and is) supposed to be the key to real change, and the most telling sections of the book are those that suggest why it hasn't worked. One reason is that parents don't respect their own qualities and their own work, and overvalue the paper certificates that qualify their children to become (unneeded) book-keepers or clerks (but actually aimless, sulky would-be consumers). Yet the main cause, the book argues, is the attitude of the teachers and the nature of the schools: Italian itself in these regions has to be learned (the local dialect is of course never written) and is learned by rote, so that (for example) children may be able to pronounce the most difficult words with the right intonation, and yet not know the meaning of the story they're reading out; the same applies to writing, which can become a mere activity of copying. Add to this the conditions of work (with the men spending long periods in the north or in Germany) and you have the makings of all the many degrees of functional illiteracy that render even very capable people panicky and inept in their dealings with the public world.

The indictment of the school system may seem the most questionable aspect of *Women in the Shadows*, but it can happen. What she records matches with my own memories of primary school in what used to be the Maelor district of Flintshire, another rural slum, where in the late Forties one learned to 'write' by copying out the Lord's Prayer again and again from a scroll hung every morning over the blackboard, and to 'read' by pronouncing words one by one. Miss Cornelisen quotes a teacher as saying that her pupils shouldn't be educated in anything but Right and Wrong ('these are peasant children') and that the only bright ones are the children of the doctor and of other teachers. At my school the headmaster was even more honest: one day he lined up the 'top' class and told nearly all of them they were going to be 'muck-shovellers'; I was exempt because I was the vicar's grand-daughter, and so were a couple of others with similarly elevated parents. We were to pass the eleven plus, and did (I've always thought by dubious means, since we were hardly taught at all). The headmaster's predictions, of course,

NEW QUARTET NOVELS

THE SAMURAI
An Entertainment
George MacBeth
A splendid extravaganza from one of Britain's finest and most popular poets: '**The Samurai** takes Ian Fleming for a ride (usually at a speed of 125 m.p.h. in a Ferrari), with every ploy in the Bond dossier sedulously raised to the umpteenth power. Employing a cast of fornicating athletes . . . Mr MacBeth has a high old time'– **Observer**
£3.95 256 pp

STRAWBERRY BOY
Jennifer Dawson
A story of our times, about work, paranoia, bureaucracy, racism, treachery, violence and liberalism, **Strawberry Boy** satirizes the hypocrisy and ambiguity of so many of our social and political poses. Rich, satisfying, complex, this is a superb successor to her much acclaimed earlier novels, such as **The Ha-Ha**.
'Miss Dawson writes very well indeed, with remarkable calm and detachment'
— **Sunday Times** £3.95 192 pp

Quartet

Published by
Quartet Books Limited
A member of the Namara Group
and available now from all good bookshops

Quartet

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came true: he produced a great many illiterates, and if he didn't create a village of 'contented' peasants that wasn't his fault, but rather the effect of expansion in the labour market, so that many of his pupils learned enough on their own to get by in the industrial Midlands.

With southern Italy there's a temptation to feel that compulsory schooling and other state projects having been tried, their failure means that these regions are intractable and hopeless. Ann Cornelisen would argue, on the contrary, that most of the attacks on the 'problem' have built even higher barriers between country and city, south and north. Her portraits try to provide something missing in the systematic accounts – more-or-less ordinary, tough, unpredictable individuals. It's difficult (even the blurb betrays her by talking about 'that land below Naples etched in blazing sunlight and bitter black shadows' etc.), but her patient, unemphatic style does a lot in simply allowing her people an articulate existence.

Mervyn Jones

Good Boys

The Monument by ROBERT BARLTROP *Pluto Press* £3.90

Robert Barltrop's history of the Socialist Party of Great Britain – reflective, frankly critical, and comical when absurdities present themselves – reads like a history of the Communist Party by the nicer sort of ex-comrade. Mr Barltrop, in fact, left the SPGB in 1960. The interesting thing is that, after nine years of searching for a new niche everywhere from the Labour Party to anarchism, he rejoined. Others have done the same; some, having quit or been expelled because of divergences from the pure doctrine, continued to be active supporters. Something about the SPGB – which claims to be the only party to preach socialism and nothing but socialism, regardless of irrelevances such as the threat of fascism or that of nuclear war – seems to exert a lasting hold on the hearts and minds of those in its orbit.

Obviously, this isn't a success story. The men who founded the party in 1904 never expected to live out their lives under capitalism. I learn from this book that the nickname 'Small Party of Good Boys' wasn't bestowed merely because of the self-righteousness of the SPGB and its practice of scrutinising applicants for membership, but primarily because it didn't reckon to establish socialism by means of an uprising or a general strike. The idea was that, as soon as the working class understood where its interests lay, 'this electoral majority would send representatives to Parliament for the single purpose of declaring the owning class dispossessed and capitalism abolished'. In the event, although the SPGB prepared incessantly for contesting elections, it didn't have the resources to put up a candidate until 1945. Its highest vote anywhere has been 900; its peak national membership was 1,100; and, saddest of all, it couldn't strike root in the major industrial regions (in 1939, a fairly good period, 15 of its 22 branches were in London).

The SPGB's most unattractive features have been its sectarianism and its intolerance. The 'hostility clause' in its set of principles forbids any collaboration with anybody for any purpose; thus, while members claimed exemption from military service in the second world war, they wouldn't cooperate for welfare purposes with the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors. Members have been expelled for the pettiest of reasons – in one case, for carrying a gas-mask in wartime. After the expulsion of a man called Wren for signing a petition to a Liberal MP (the aim of the petition was agreed to be wholly laudable), members of his branch were charged with 'action detrimental to the interests of the party in that . . . you voted against the expulsion of Comrade Wren'. It's easy to laugh at this solemn heresy-hunting, or to find it sad, as Mr Baltrop does; but the cast of mind that it betrays is sinister. After all, when the possession of real power makes it feasible, this is how people get shot.

To the credit of the SPGB one must chalk up the integrity of its mostly indigent militants; its scrupulous democracy (with endless conferences, general meetings and ballots, and executive meetings open to all members and even non-members); and the uncomfortable fact that in its unvarying pessimism it hasn't been all that wrong. In the Fifties, when 'affluence', the welfare state and full employment appeared to demonstrate a basic change in society, the SPGB looked silly for insisting that these were delusions. Almost anybody in the Labour Party would have been astonished by the prediction that in 1976 there would be 1½ million unemployed, an admitted fall in living standards, and grave concern over poverty and homelessness. The SPGB wouldn't have been surprised at all.

The most instructive way to read this book is to see the frustrations of the SPGB as an extra-sharp reflection of those which have befallen all socialists. Remarking on the party's inability to put across a clear picture of what a socialist society would be like, Mr Barltrop comments: 'Socialism . . . now represented a general tendency and set of attitudes, in the same way as Conservatism or Liberalism.' We can all take this to heart. Again, writing of the long deferral of the expected dawn, he notes: 'Half-consciously the party was now seeing the working-class as its adversary; socialism was unattained not because of the capitalists but because of the obtuse, uncaring proletariat.' With even the Labour Party down to 37 per cent of the votes, you don't have to frequent SPGB circles to find that bitter reaction.

The mode of communication is one explanation, though doubtless not the basic one, of the disappointment. The SPGB and other socialist pioneers relied extensively on open-air meetings, held at recognised pitches where a crowd always gathered. Thanks to traffic and redevelopment, the pitches themselves have mostly vanished. Big indoor meetings are likewise fond memories; in 1945 the SPGB candidate for Paddington could fill the Edgware Road Met with 2,000 seats. (The old Met has gone too.) Anyone who has been long enough in politics knows the difference between the traditional speech, in which one can develop an argument, and the TV interview, in which one can't. Part of the strategy of the ruling class, the SPGB would say. A change for the worse, at all events.

John Raymond

On the Go

François Mauriac – A Study of the Writer and the Man by ROBERT SPEAIGHT *Chatto* £6.75

Some great writers, like gods in disguise in the ancient world, strike and reveal themselves at random. It would be good – neat and heartening and handy and deeply satisfying to our cooperative ego – to think that they all employed the same open approach, wrestled with and threw us, writer at reader, in the first encounter. In fact things do not always turn out like that, in life or in our own most sympathetic fiction. Chance plays a heavy part. That is why for me a long but ill-equipped obsession with the art and life of François Mauriac must begin with a certain summer afternoon in my sixteenth year in the stalls of Wyndham's Theatre (not, as Robert Speaight remembers in this superlative study, the New), to watch a performance of *Asmodée*, translated by Basil Bartlett as *The Intruder*.

It was stifling in the theatre; the matinée sandwiches curled and the butter ran. On stage the chatelaine quizzed her daughter, contemned the companion and flirted despotically (because of the cash bond between them) but dispiritedly with the Jansenist tutor. Far away in the Landes, and in the theatre seemingly, the tongues of the lizards, that unangelic Mauriacian chorus, flickered over the stones, as they do at the close of *Destins*. It was the most exciting and undecipherable afternoon I had ever spent in the theatre (James Agate had hinted as much the previous Sunday, which is why my mother and I were there). I have remained in something of that questioning mood about Mauriac ever since.

The writer *and* the man, says the subtitle. It is a large bill on both counts Speaight has tackled the two aspects of his subject in masterly and initially separate compartments yet ultimately in a synthesis ing fashion, analysing the art and dealing effectively (but not exhaustively) with the fiction and illuminating the life with much vivid incident and detail. (He, rightly for his own purposes, discards the trivial gossip which time alone will finally discard.) The result is a prestigious feat of cultural entent which seems almost too good to be true but is surely as near the rounded and unlikely truth about Mauriac as a friend and foreigner is likely to get. Nor is the creativ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

impersonal malice absent – fraternal, Pascalian, almost – so much a feature of that hoarse strangulated whisper as I remember it on the one occasion when I was privileged to visit him when his book on de Gaulle was published.

The art of writing may be a sedentary occupation, but for this writer who died in his 85th year it had been one of full and remarkably varied achievement. All his life, allowing for the usual illnesses and intermissions and his significant breakdown in 1928, Mauriac, spiritually and cerebrally, was on the go. The reader who remembers him primarily as a novelist should be reminded of the rest of a writing life that began with poetry and blossomed late into political journalism and polemic of the highest order. In between came essays, plays, stories, biography and criticism, a life of Christ, a study of Racine.

Endlessly, he interrogated others and himself – asking questions of great writers such as Molière (his explanation of the writing of *Le Misanthrope* is still the best and the most original), Rousseau, Flaubert, those he had loved and grieved for (such as Proust, at whose funeral their friend Maurice Barrés remembered, 'he was our young man'). And there was Gide, to whom he confessed, 'you have often troubled me, but I have received from you nothing but good, if it is a good thing to love life better than I loved it before I knew you'; and those he looked on with a relatively cool admiration: Claudel, Montherlant.

Over and over he continued to ask questions of himself in the shape of the men and women he had created, that painful gallery of losing souls, each of whom he continued to agonise over after he had long ago written an apparent finis to their destinies, continuing the exploration of inexplicable evil in the nature of Thérèse Desqueyroux (in whose essence some have found an analogy with Coleridge's conception of Iago), discovering how the saving hypocrisy of Brigitte Pian ('one of those people who choose God but who God, maybe, does not choose Himself') defeats its own pharisaic purpose.

As a boy Mauriac had asked of people 'that they be good, that they be just, that they be intelligent, that they be pure'. In spite of his upbringing, he had kept his faith and it was the same questions that he was still asking at the end of his life – even of his old friend and admirer, the General.

Among this week's contributors:

PROFESSOR WILFRED BECKERMAN is the author of *In Defence of Economic Growth* (1974).

VIEDA SKULTANS lectures in Mental Health at the University of Bristol. Her book *Intimacy and Ritual* was published in 1974.

IAN HAMILTON is the editor of the *New Review*. His latest book, *The Little Magazines*, will be published by Weidenfeld next week.

MERVYN JONES's latest book, *Scenes from Bourgeois Life*, was published last month by Quartet.

Frank Kermode

Pleasure Principle

Imagination by MARY WARNOCK *Faber* £6.50

Imagination has a modern sense quite different from the ancient; it used to be the part of the mind that made things up, with or without the aid of sensory reports, and sometimes with, sometimes without the censorship of reason. The modern version was invented in the 18th century, largely to explain how it is that we are able to experience reality as continuous; to recognise cats as cats and our own cat as distinct from all others. For Hume it was a fictive power, making more comfortable an otherwise practically uninhabitable world. For Kant it was what we must have if our experience of the world is as we know it to be; everybody has it and in the same measure, for nobody experiences the world as serial, discontinuous and chaotic appearance. It 'determines sense *a priori* in respect of its form'. Whereas for Hume it enabled us to understand words uttered in the absence of objects as having a general application, for Kant it enables us to regard objects as objects, and furthermore to recognise them as objects of a certain kind. So all perception is 'mind-imbued'; experience is a mixture of passive reception and active perception; and what makes the mix is Imagination.

Refining this idea to include the experience of beauty in what is perceived, Kant attributes to the imagination the power to perceive finality of form, an order proper to the object itself. This perception confers pleasure on the perceiver; it is the same power that operates in normal perception, and it is likewise held in common by everybody. But there is another level of imaginative activity, associated by Kant with the sublime. At this level it creates a second nature, higher than the first because it goes beyond the appearance of things and tries to contemplate the ideas of reason. It operates in this way in men of genius.

One of the charms of this very attractive book is that it disentangles and makes luminous the daunting complex of notions I have here so grossly simplified; Mrs Warnock has the pertinacious delicacy of Ariadne in the labyrinth. Having got us through Kant she gives shorter measure to Schelling, who has to be put in because it was more from him than from Kant, unfortunately, that Coleridge got his notions. Schelling turgidly and wantonly confounds the fine Kantian distinctions, but has to be credited with having solemnised the whole thing, and with having got across the ideas that imagination is the power of seeing things as they are, namely as symbolic, and that there is associated with its exercise a virtually limitless freedom.

We are thus prepared for the main business of the book, which is with Coleridge and Wordsworth. They are far from unfrequented by philosophers, but Mrs Warnock's determination to say what, and no more than, is meant, and to do so with a proper professional astringency, gives her treatment of very cloudy matters an unfamiliar sharp outline. She is a much better guide to Coleridge than most literary critics, partly because she knows where scorn is appropriate. From her point of view Coleridge isn't a philosopher at all – 'he knows nothing about philosophy, but he knows what, for the time being, he likes'. Schelling in particular seems to have had the knack of formulating Coleridge's opinions before he could do so himself; the distinction between primary and secondary imagination (which Coleridge himself never fully grasped) and between reason and understanding are Kantian ideas powerfully distorted by Schelling's idealism. What Coleridge found in German metaphysics was an obscure justification of his belief that by understanding his own feelings he could understand the world.

Wordsworth gets much more respect. He shared many of Coleridge's views, but his theories grew out of his own experience, as Coleridge's did not. Mrs Warnock has some admirable discussions of the poetry in which imagination is an active power making images or forms that operate in absence or at a distance; of reality represented as partly mind-dependent; and of the special value given by Wordsworth to pleasure, of which fear may be a component.

There are among Wordsworth's ideas two that need special discussion by Mrs Warnock, and one of them gets it. This is the part of imagination in perception, and she endorses Wordsworth's rather Kantian position by defending it against the critique of the phenomenologists. The last section of her book is largely concerned with this defence, and includes examinations of Brentano, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Jaspers, Sartre and Ryle. Finally we reach the point where it can be said that the imagination works in perception, and has the affective powers that Wordsworth spoke of. This appears to the author to justify her own belief that since everybody has imagination, and since imagination is inseparable from emotion, everybody's taste and sensibility can be educated. She agrees with Mill that ideas 'excite imaginative emotion', and finds no reason to suppose that the pleasure will ever wear out.

This leads us to consider the Wordsworthian notion that doesn't get fully discussed. Apart from the imagination which acts in perception there is the higher kind, 'that glorious faculty/That higher minds bear with them as their own'. This is another Kantian idea. But what happens to these higher minds is that they are in perpetual danger; the pleasure may well wear out. Mrs Warnock doesn't, of course, ignore what Coleridge had to say about this, but tends to dismiss it, thinking that what he suffered was not so much loss as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

envy of William. She notes also that Wordsworth was aware of the diminution of joy as the years go by. But this is hardly enough; all Wordsworth's greatest poetry is about loss or the threat of loss, and the difficult consolations that can be found for the condition of loss: 'I see by glimpses now, when age comes on/May scarcely see at all.' Wordsworth always assumed that the higher minds went with bodies of more than ordinary organic sensibility, and so, though peculiarly susceptible to joy, were also far more prone to disaster than ordinary men; so that for him the problem of how to live in a joyless world was the most pressing of all. It may complicate the philosopher's task that 'consolation' often has a strongly 'associationist' element. Anyway, the education of the imagination up the scale from the ordinary to the higher ought perhaps to provide for despondency as well as for gladness.

With this reservation I should recommend the book to anybody who finds the whole topic repellently difficult. I will add one minor criticism; the reference to du Fresnay's *De Arte Graphica* on page 104 could mislead a student, since it does not tell him that this very minor figure was simply peddling an already corrupted tag (*ut pictura poesis*) from Horace; people had been doing it for centuries, and the notion that it all started in England because of the translation of du Fresnay in 1750 is wrong anyway, since Dryden published one in 1695. This is a very little growl from the Minotaur, Literary Criticism, as Philosophy follows her thread through his maze.

Vieda Skultans

The Alien

Letters, Vol. II 1951-1961 by C. G. JUNG selected and edited by Gerhard Adler *Routledge* £11.50

Jung and the Story of our Time by LAURENS VAN DER POST *Hogarth Press* £5.50

This is the second of two volumes of letters. The earlier volume covered the period from 1906 to 1950, and the second covers the last ten years of Jung's life. The letters omit two very interesting areas of Jung's life: the Freud/Jung correspondence which has been published separately, and the letters exchanged between Jung and Antonia Wolff, his one-time mistress and lifelong friend. Jung's distaste for self-exposure intensified with age as he withdrew increasingly into himself. For that reason his letters provide a valuable source of additional information. In his reluctantly dictated autobiography, *Memoirs, Dreams and Reflections*, conceived during the same period as these letters, Jung writes of his life as being

> singularly poor in outward happenings. I cannot tell much about them, for it would strike me as hollow and insubstantial. I can understand them only in the light of inner happenings. It is these that make up the singularity of my life and with these my autobiography deals.

The letters redress this overemphasis on spiritual essences and show that Jung felt at home in the world of the concrete and was also superbly adept at handling its problems.

Unlike Freud, Jung did not give detailed accounts of his patients' cases. His writings are altogether more theoretical. His many replies to personal queries and anxieties are, therefore, both uniquely revealing and a delight to read. Witness, for example, his reply to the anonymous Herr N. who confided his marital problems to Jung:

> You have experienced in your marriage what is an almost universal fact – that individuals are different from one another. Basically, each remains for the other an unfathomable enigma . . . Everybody has his dark side which – so long as all goes well – he had better not know about.

Expressed in this way, Jung's rather mysterious and cumbersome concept of the *shadow* becomes less forbidding and more relevant. Again there are revealing insights on Jung's attitudes to women. For example: 'A man's psychology gets badly undermined by too much motherliness. Anything you acquire by your own effort is worth a hundred years with a woman analyst.' Considering that Jung's inspirational powers were in fact directed largely at women, and that the therapeutic school which he established is largely feminine, this is indeed an interesting comment.

For those who have found Jung's work maddeningly abstract and obscure, his letters will provide a welcome contrast and introduction to his thought. For the *cognoscenti* of Jungian theory they will be a necessary background to the work of an otherwise highly private individual.

Laurens van der Post knew Jung for the last 11 years of his life, making regular pilgrimages to Zurich in order to see him. As a man of action who nevertheless has mystical leanings and an interest in the 'life of the interior', Van der Post would seem to be admirably suited to reflect Jung's multi-faceted personality. However, his book will be a disappointment to all but the most fanatical members of his literary following. It is difficult to see for whom it is intended. It is obscure in the extreme and the few facts which it gives are well disguised. The title is misleading, since Van der Post certainly does not tell a story. He devotes a whole chapter of the book to himself, and admits that he has

> done practically no academic research in writing this account. I have consulted none of the numbers of my friends who knew and worked with Jung. I have read no books about him in this period and only turned to his own work as I remembered what was significant to me in it and wished to confirm it.

This attitude is surely an unproductive dichotomy, a naïve reversal of the emphasis on the superiority of intellect versus feeling of a kind which Jung never intended. But for all its irritations Van der Post's book unearths occasional nuggets of information. For example, when Jung was asked

> how many of all the people who came to him had been healed, he replied that once he had made a rough assessment: he thought that one third of the vast number had not been healed, a third had been partially healed and a third entirely.

In his own intuitive way Jung arrived at an estimate similar to ones currently measuring outcome in psychotherapy. These statements pinpoint both the strengths and the weaknesses of Jung's ideas. With homing intuition he arrived at good ideas but he failed to develop these because he lacked an adequate conceptual framework. What Van der Post's contribution emphasises is the need for a thorough biography of Jung. Perhaps it is Jung's image of himself as an alien in life which has deterred biographers from such an undertaking.

Corinna Adam

That Man Again

My Trial by JOHN STONEHOUSE *Star Books* 95p

Even as a fairly devoted Stonehouse-watcher, there are only two more books I want to read about him, and this is not one of them. For reasons of sheer prurience, I wouldn't mind a blow-by-blow, *Forum*-style account of his sexual activities; it is certainly hard to imagine either of his two chief ladies, the immensely self-possessed Mrs Stonehouse or the diamond-hard Mrs Buckley, producing any such thing, although that is surely where the money lies, and there can scarcely be any doubt that all parties are very very interested in money. On a more serious level, there could be a fascinating book, using Stonehouse but not concentrating exclusively on him, about the corruption of idealistic young politicians – case histories on the greed for money of men who have political power, and the greed for political power of men who have money. But to be any good, this second book would certainly be libellous, alas. So we are left with the latest outpourings of Mr Stonehouse's pen, which seems unstoppable if magic in no other way.

The most remarkable thing about *My Trial* is the 'publishing feat' it represents – appearing, in paperback form, within a few days of his being sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, and managing to include details of the sentence in the last chapter. (Heavens, we'll be getting daily newspapers next.)

The book begins with a précis of his previous effort, *Death of an Idealist* (W. H. Allen), which I reviewed only last November, though it seems much longer ago. Then comes an exceedingly tedious section on his experiences in Australia, with much of the extradition proceedings quoted verbatim. There is some comment, of a not very enlightening kind, on the admittedly disgraceful way in which, last year, the Select Committee procedure was used obstructively and unjustly (Stonehouse was in the middle of his extradition case when he asked the Select Committee for an adjournment of its ruling that he must return to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain by 6 June. The Committee refused.) But by far the most interesting section is the account of his trial at the Old Bailey.

It seems that the endless notes we saw Mr Stonehouse taking in the dock were not intended simply for use in his defence but were concurrently being written up in diary form. This is obvious not only from the speed with which the book has appeared, but from the clumsy and revealing mixture of past and present tenses. There are also swings of moods, from elation to depression, though mostly the author seems to have been cheerful and excited about his prospects, with only the occasional all-too-recognisable side-swipe at the media; he is not the first man to blame us for his misfortunes, and he won't be the last. But even here there is little new, except for the occasional anecdote about, for instance, the court policeman who gave him some advice on how *not* to carry on. There are some insights into the way juries are chosen. Since, under our system, not even their occupations may be known, Stonehouse's lawyers went out and got the addresses of all 50 potential jurors and automatically challenged anyone who seemed to live in a middle-class area. But otherwise the book has little to tell us that is not in the press cuttings. So now, could we toilers in that particular vineyard have just a little respite?

Julian Barnes

The Last Detail

The Patriot's Progress by HENRY WILLIAMSON *Macdonald & Jane's* £3.50
Strawberry Boy by JENNIFER DAWSON *Quartet* £3.95
Vets Might Fly by JAMES HERRIOT *Michael Joseph* £3.50

No apologies, given the midsummer publishing snooze, for opening with a reissue from the days when novelists confronted large public themes, and their works (if noticed by Arnold Bennett) became reputable subjects for public discussion. Henry Williamson's Great War classic, first published in 1930, survives very strongly, partly through having, like its lino-cut illustrations by William Kermode, a properly selective attitude to detail. Williamson avoids precise locations, military strategy, and the distractions of characterisation. His hero, John Bullock, is an unambiguous Everysoldier, but the actual experiences of war – lice, mud, pain, bad food, bad brothels, doses of rum and jocular slang – are ruthlessly particularised; as is the catalogue of emotions, from boredom through fear and relief to the final insensate stupor which remains undisturbed even by the death of friends.

The beauty and excitement of war are not hidden either: Bullock, watching a night bombardment from a safe hill, finds it 'awful, and terrible, and lovely'. Though mostly sticking to the flat tone of factual exposure, Williamson can be Sassoonishly sardonic, as in Captain Shanks's choice lecture on Allied War Aims:

> I've got some bumff here I'm supposed to read to you. But you've heard all this balls before. We'll probably go over the top. I'm with you, boys; remember, we're all together in this. If a shell's got my number on it, then that's that: if it hasn't, I shall be all right. Same with you. The odds are three to one on a blighty. That's all, Sergeant-Major, dismiss the company.

Above all, the novel has a persuasive rhythm to it, built partly from the handy pattern of military events, but supported by repeated verbal motifs, the cries of 'Roll on, Duration', the automatic 'Stuff to give 'em, sir' when the rum is passed. The climax, in which Bullock gets blown up, is ironically shadowed by the realisation that in all his time at the front he has never actually set eyes on a Fritz. The single miscalculation of tone in the book lies in the conclusion, with the one-legged Bullock unnecessarily protesting 'We are England' to a toffish non-combatant, who promises him the country will not forget its heroes.

It's not just the readjustment to less cataclysmic subject-matter that makes Jennifer Dawson's novel take its time settling into focus. It seems undecided whether to centre on Peter and Molly, well-meaning liberals who say things like, 'We really must do more about race'; Saul Chatland, a rootless West Indian living with an older white woman; John Wersby, a neurotic musician who distrusts language but can make his violin sing like a woman in orgasm; or a lurching commune, peopled by jargon-spouting revolutionaries of all classes. Gradually it emerges that *Strawberry Boy* (a contemptuous nickname for a co-opted white) is more about attitudes than relationships: Saul, though central, is a catalyst rather than a focus, a provoker of guilt and fear who has himself fair cause for alarm at spade-bashers and heavy do-gooders. 'Race and colour,' he writes gawkily, 'are rather like building plots that anyone with personality problems can grab hold of and build on.'

Miss Dawson's view of racial malcommunication is as bleak as the depressing slum-clearance areas in which her characters move: eventually, even the squatters who churn out idealistic revolutionary drivel on their Gestetner decide they don't want to live next door to a black commune; and the repeated phrase 'one is all right', which rings in Saul's ears, has a grim echo of Enoch Powell's remarks about numbers. Miss Dawson pins down her locale well enough – bandages going rusty round the taps, the roll-on supporting the geyser-pipe – though there is such a thing as overkill in squalid detail. She never manages in *Strawberry Boy* to erect the same sort of brooding, dominant image as that of the ha-ha in her first novel: the imagery here, though forceful, is brief in effect; but her novel is dogged, intense, and in parts poignant.

Years ago, the great British reading public at least got a dose of imagination with its animals. Nowadays, in place of *The Cat That Walked By Itself*, they want to read about The Cat that Shat on the Car Mat, not to mention The Boxer that Farted (shades of Bateman), and The Sow with a Pea in her Tit. Not, one feels, that the current Gadarene impulse towards the cash desk with the latest Herriot is any of the author's responsibility. He's clearly an amiable and artless fellow, and, as far as it matters, blameless. It's not his fault that he clogs up the paperback top ten; it's not his fault that he can't write for toffee; it's not even his fault, somehow, that he advertises W. H. Smith & Son in the *Radio Times*. It all just simply happened to him, like the whacky things he writes about.

Vets Might Fly wraps a loose framework of RAF reminiscences round more of the familiar little droppings from a pre-war vet's life. Mucky stuff it is too, a lot of it, from bovine gastric lavages and porcine anal temperature-taking, to canine seminal leakage. 'I rotated my wrist again and again till both uterine cornua were fully involuted' is what gets them going in the shires. The wider questions aren't left unscathed either – 'Do dogs have a sense of humour?' ponders one unshrinking chapter; while Mr Herriot's companion, a 'colourful character' called Siegfried Farnon, is a veritable Polonius of counsel: 'There is more to be learned up a cow's arse than in many an encyclopaedia.' What really gets you in the guts, however, is the soft, soft centre behind the turdy details. I once knew a vet who told me when he did an operation he often found that for a couple of days afterwards his rectal and oral expulsions (as Mr Herriot would put it) bore the flavour of the beast's innards. Several days after opening up *Vets Might Fly*, the ranker stenches of sentimentality kept coming back to me: whiffs from The Cat That Died at Christmas, from The Borstal Boy who Loved a Mongrel, from The Cow that Escaped the Knacker and Found Its Way Home. You'll nose the smell next time you pass the bestseller table.

Christopher Reid

Verge Escapement With Fusee

Ooidal, a chunky gem
for a connoisseur of time!

The infinite kingdom Hamlet
posited, locked in an amulet:

Aleph and abraxas . . .
As though in Chinese boxes,

I picture it safe in the hands
of the German merchant who owned it –

a silver case of fidgety
wheels, rich with activity:

cracked in half like a nut;
squinted into, then shut.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Films

John Coleman

Gunning It

Taxi Driver *Odeon, Haymarket*
Family Plot *Empire*
Family Life *Phoenix, East Finchley*
Harry and Walter Go to New York *Odeon, Leicester Square*

Something had to go last week and it was my closing exhortation to catch, at all costs, the 70-minute documentary, *Welcome to Britain,* a bold, funny, horrifying, if inconclusive look at how we treat certain immigrants, made by Ben Lewin and accompanying Martin Scorsese's first feature, *Who's That Knocking at My Door?*, at the Gate, Notting Hill. Apologies and on to the phenomenal Mr Scorsese, whose record since has been the Corman-produced *Boxcar Bertha, Mean Streets, Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* and now the Cannes prize-winner and most trumpeted film of the year, *Taxi Driver.* Robert de Niro, the irresponsible tearaway among the seedy little Caesars of *Mean Streets* as well as the young Corleone in Coppola's *The Godfather, Part II*, fairly drives away with this one: he is Travis Bickle, an ex-Vietnam serviceman with insomnia and headaches, first seen getting a job as a New York cabby. He'll pick up fares anywhere and, as he confides to his read-out diary, work sappingly long hours during the night. The neon streets glide past, red lights (Scorsese is fond of suffusing images with red) are successively wiped from the screen, the meter ticks, gaudy whores and nocturnal loiterers litter the sidewalks. Travis's diary tells a lot: 'Scum,' he writes, and 'Each time I return the car to the garage I have to clean the come off the back seat. Sometimes I have to clean off the blood'. And yet his only relaxation seems to be dirty movies on 42nd Street. Insulated in his cab, he is a loner, a watcher.

One day finds him parked outside the campaign HQ of a presidential candidate, Palantine, staring at a pretty worker, Betsy (Cybill Shepherd). Obsessed, he strolls into the office, offers himself as a volunteer, asks for a coffee date. You're lonely, he tells her with assurance, 'I'm there to protect you,' making joke muscle. Classy Betsy is briefly taken by him (again that voice-over diary does useful work here: 'I think that was a good choice,' he records, detailing what they had with their coffee) but as quickly ditches him when their next date turns out to be a Swedish porn movie. He phones, sends flowers, his headaches get worse: 'You're only as healthy as you feel,' he parrots to himself. Anger grows: the Betsy-girls, 'they're like a union': a last, despairing fling has him slung out of the candidate's HQ. Earlier, Palantine himself has been his fare and patronisingly asks him what should be done about things. Travis stumblingly knows: 'You should clean up this city . . . really clean it up.' Another pick-up proves to be a bearded nutter, played by Scorsese in person, who has him stop by the kerb while they both gaze up at a lighted window where a woman's barely-clad silhouette can be seen: it is the crazed man's wife; 'a nigger lives there'; he describes with relish what he is going to do to her with a .44 magnum pistol. Paul Schrader's script is strong meat and this Schrader must himself be an unusual fellow: he has written a critical work, *Transcendental Style*, about such quietistic directors as Ozu, Bresson and Dreyer, while admitting to an absolute devotion to gun-collecting.

Previous references to guns now come together: Travis is fascinated by another girl, a teenage whore glimpsed two or three times. Her protector, Sport (Harvey Keitel, the squeamish 'moral' hero of *Who's That Knocking . . . ?*), lounging in a doorway, fixes her price, says she is twelve-and-a-half and explains her specialities. Meanwhile, Travis has apparently come to a decision and it is the peculiar genius, evil or otherwise, of Scorsese's film that we are drawn, almost resistless, along with him. The invitation is to sleep-walk by his side towards some releasing action. (There has been a beautifully played, incoherent scene with another cabby, Peter Boyle, during which Travis is really asking for help: no sale.) And so we discover Travis, in a dwelt-on episode that is damn near lyrical as it exposes the hardware, buying four guns from a shifty peddler of everything bad in a cheesy hotel room. Then he goes into training: chin-ups, right diet, target-practice – converting himself into a walking arsenal. By chance, he is on hand to shoot down a hold-up man in a store one night: the owner tells him to beat it. But he is blooded. He scrawls a lying anniversary card home, TO A COUPLE OF GOOD SCOUTS, saying he is in secret government work and has a girl called Betsy. In the streets, everyday violence goes on: a body is casually hauled away at the edge of the screen. Now he is in the child-prostitute's bead-curtained room. This flip, knowing kid, uncomfortably well performed by Jodie Foster, first says her name is Easy, then admits to Iris. Travis somehow conveys that his only concern is to redeem her; the next day they have a late, late breakfast together, paralleling the Betsy coffee-date. Iris just might take off to a commune in Vermont with him: but that, of course, is as alien a notion to Travis as her whoring.

Comes the double, built-to move. Head shaved to an Indian ridge down the middle, combat jacket concealing his armoury, the cabby stands on the fringes of a motley rally for Palantine at Columbus Circle: spotted by a giant bodyguard, he flees without firing. He makes for Sport in his doorway. 'Suck on this,' he says, shooting. Then, after a short squat in a neighbouring stoop, he is off up the stairs to Iris's, where a thoroughly messy, slow, sustained gun-battle is orchestrated: he kills three, is wounded himself, a leisurely camera looks from overhead at the carnage, then wanders gently downstairs, dwelling on bloodstains, pistols, bodies. Outside, a crowd churns in slowed motion, the music of the late Bernard Herrmann thumping over.

Which brings us, at last, to the vexed conclusion, in a couple of senses. The technique of voice-over documents (diary, card, note to Iris) that has paid off so well is thriftily used again. Newspaper cuttings pinned to a wall proclaim Travis's heroism and there is a letter, too, from Iris's grateful parents, presumably read aloud by her father. Back at work, Travis picks up a new fare, Betsy. They exchange nothings: she gets out and stands equivocally (wistfully?) as he drives away. That Mr Scorsese has achieved a hard, frightening, impressionistic portrait of a kind of Nighttown all too clearly recognisable to Americans goes without saying. There are superb, enduring images – the great facade, with lackadaisical tarts and riffraff adorning its windows, of Iris's tenement, for instance. And De Niro can't be faulted. What disturbs me lies more in the writing of his character, around his character. Surely he charms both Betsy (for a while) and Iris too easily? Would he genuinely be so naive as to take Betsy to a sex flick? And, a different tack but the biggest question of all, how much is that final brief encounter with the groomed girl meant to imply an endorsement of Travis's one-man mayhem? Hell, he looks positively *purged* when we last see him. One knows his headaches have gone.

Any Hitchcock should be news and *Family Plot* is his 53rd. I wish I could enthuse more, but I am one of those renegades who have not enjoyed his little, crafted ways much since *Psycho.* The latest excursion is (a slap and some spots of blood apart) tremendously amiable and unshocking: it also suffers from some basic creative anaemia. Blanche (Barbara Harris), a fake spiritualist, and George (Bruce Dern), a 'resting' actor turned cabby, are promised $10,000 by a rich lady if her dead sister's long-lost bastard son can be located. By a coincidence familiar to Hitch-hikers, Fran (Karen Black) is nearly run down by George as she is en route to picking up a large diamond as ransom for a chap she and her partner in crime have kidnapped: her partner is Arthur Adamson (William Devane), a jeweller and the very bastard – who fled his foster parents, having burnt them to cinders years before – B. & G. are bemusedly after. A bishop snatched in full view of his congregation, a chase with the participants decorously keeping to cemetery paths: these will be manna to addicts. More matter, say I.

Fairly recommended: Krzysztof Zanussi's *Family Life,* five years old, about Warsaw engineer Wit (Daniel Olbrychski) returning for an anguished 24 hours to his dilapidated ancestral home and demented kin; Maja Komorowska tiresomely flighty as sister; a dog called Caligari. *Harry and Walter* (James Caan and Elliott Gould) should have saved themselves a trip: for true slapstick refined and *timed,* the Chaplin season at the Everyman.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Theatre

Craig Raine

I Am the Walrus

The Seagull *Duke of York*
T Zee *Royal Court*
Clouds *Hampstead*

Chekhov is a great minimalist. Like Jane Austen, who can create interest and comedy from a spectacle rivet or a pencil stub, he makes do with very little. He, too, prefers the sigh and the shrug to the gothic groan, so it seems right that *The Seagull* should share amateur dramatics with *Mansfield Park*. Moreover, it's easy to imagine Mr Woodhouse's fussy hypochondria finding a place in Chekhov's canon. A schoolmaster pinched for cash, a plain girl who takes snuff and drinks, a landowner to whom nothing has happened, a doctor who is past the unadventurous adventures of his youth – these are the brilliantly drab stuff of his art. 'The main thing, my dears,' Chekhov instructed his players, 'is not to be theatrical. The characters are all ordinary, simple people.' And this goes for the famous writer and actress, Trigorin and Irina, whose charisma is quickly subdued until (as Nina observes ruefully) 'they are crying, fishing, playing cards, laughing and losing their tempers like anyone else'. Chekhov would have agreed with Browning's Andrea del Sarto that 'a common greyness silvers everything – all in a twilight'. Thus it is entirely appropriate that, when Kostya lets daylight into his head, the noise of the off-stage shot should be passed off by the doctor as an exploding bottle of ether – minimised as it is by the hubbub from a game of Lotto.

There are no bright lights in *The Seagull*. Everyone is a failure, from the inert to the ambitious. The young, stage-struck Nina is quietly deranged by her break-up with Trigorin and the prospect of third-class travel to obscurity in the provinces she hardly left. Even Trigorin, though superficially successful, knows that he is dwarfed by the huge spectres of Tolstoy and Turgenev. Doubtless there was an element of self-portraiture in Trigorin, but Chekhov was himself more resourceful in his dealings with the great art of the past. *The Seagull*, for example, deliberately invokes and challenges *Hamlet* by a series of quotations, some obvious, others not. 'Or I see a cloud over there like a grand piano,' Trigorin tells Nina, 'So I think it must go in a story.' It is, of course, Hamlet's cloud that is 'very like a whale', but appropriately scaled down.

Chekhov, however, doesn't stop at quotation. Kostya's dislike of Trigorin and the subsequent muffed duel are a muted version of Hamlet's oedipal jealousy of Claudius. Trigorin, like Claudius, knows he is behaving wrongly in tempting Nina but is similarly unable to help himself. The quarrel between Kostya and his mother, with its mixture of bitter indignation and tenderness, evokes the bedroom scene in *Hamlet*. Masha, the steward's daughter, dresses in black like Hamlet because she is in mourning for her life. Her father, a bore with a limited fund of theatrical anecdotes, recalls Polonius at his most 'pastoral-comical' tedious. There is a play within the play. Nina goes mad like Ophelia.

It isn't difficult to see what Chekhov found congenial in Shakespeare's play: after all, as the Prince constantly reminds us, nothing happens in *Hamlet*, and very little happens in a Chekhov play. The sporadic references serve to defend *The Seagull*'s inactivity by claiming kin with Shakespeare. They tell us that even the greatest drama consists not of action so much as words, words, words. But more than that, they ironise the panoply of Shakespeare's setting – once recognise *Hamlet* in *The Seagull* and it is impossible not to see the Danish court in its everyday, domestic aspect. *Hamlet* becomes a family squabble in which worried, wordy people are on their way to failure – crying and losing their tempers like anyone else. At the same time, Chekhov claims Shakespearean grandeur for a jilted girl, so that the minimal no longer seems a limitation.

The Seagull, however, is not easy to play, as the transferred Derby Playhouse production amply confirms. The piece is full of calculated risks: towards the end of Act III, Chekhov leaves an empty stage, replete with ringing silence; earlier, he gives Trigorin a realistically interminable speech, leaving his Nina to grin and bear it. Above all, the pathetic elements risk contagion from the surrounding prosaic comedy. They require intensity. Alas, Alan Bates is a zestless Trigorin, bringing to the role the winded lethargy of a long-distance runner, so closely does the novelist resemble the detached observer he played in *Otherwise Engaged*. Georgina Hale is miscast as Nina: in the mad scene her reedy, South Kensington counter-tenor makes her sound, not tragic, but stoned. 'I am a seagull,' she whinges, 'No, that's not right.' Nor is it. 'I am the walrus' would be nearer the mark. Richard O'Callaghan, who plays Kostya, is almost equally handicapped by his face: its natural expression is the grin of a reined-in Derby winner, quite at odds with the melancholy he must convey.

On the other hand, when he mouths the words of his play, the action is thoughtfully picked up and deflated by his mother as she munches Turkish Delight. And among the minor roles, Robert Flemyng is excellent as old Sorin – all hands, and the hands all knuckles, his head waggling like one of those shell-shocked alsatians that dodder in rear windows on the motorway. Gabrielle Lloyd looks right as Masha, with dingy smoker's teeth, oily skin and a cigarette hole in her dress. Otherwise, there is a tear in the sky that needs mending, and sound effects should be audible *before* characters comment on them.

T Zee, the new camp musical and adult panto, features two anthropologists aptly kitted out in Baden-Powell uniforms. They meet T Zee (Tarzan as a Nashville hillbilly clad in a freckled impetigo skin) among the jungular ruins of Los Angeles where they are pursued and screwed by the forces of evil – a cadre of degenerates from the pop era. Anyone doing a doctorate on *Little Richard as Seminal Figure* or *Falsetto from Jackie Wilson to Jimmie Jones* should get their ass along and bray – after 90 minutes, I confess I had a bit of a pain in mine.

Following his well-made exercise in farce, *Donkeys' Years*, Michael Frayn returns to a more characteristic mode in the quietly comic and thoughtful *Clouds* – slightly disappointing, but worth a visit as always. I'll say more about it next week.

Alan Brownjohn

The Dolls' House

Sixteen miles from anywhere larger
On the map of a renamed county,
With an ancient market-square to which
Sore-faced farmers drive flocks in
brown, tiered
Lorries every Thursday is this
Country town: a pestle-and-mortar
Restaurant, a glinting pharmacy
With rows of touched-up tincture jars, a
Salon of 'Gowns', one minimarket
Grocery, and a furniture shop.

Past the last black-and-white traffic sign,
The last lights in small manor-houses
Go out, and one more squirearchical
Day is done with; county magazines
Lie smoothly on their own in the dark,
The warm engines of the GL-12s
Click and settle in their garages
In villages where old bachelor
Campanologists tire and hunger
At last, drop the ropes and sprint off home.

Through the glass of the furniture shop
Gleams a sleek room, indescribably
Tidy and perfect: purple wall lights
Allure and chill, and a magenta
Carpet sets a table and two chairs
Fast in the specific attention
Of two poised lamps. This is a ghosts' room:
Two especially, two spectrally
Immaculate-feeling people could
Stop and repose here at two a.m.

As exactly pure exemplars of
How it ought to be. It would give them
That virgin bed with a canopy
In the background, spaced silken pillows
Asking those who have walked at a fixed
Distance for so long to lie, chastely
Apart, until the first unpolluted bird
Announces dawn. Shall we step inside?
I can't think we or it will ever
Suit each other quite so well again.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

Yours Truly

Dear Arthur Mitchell,

It's difficult to write a straight review of your Dance Theatre of Harlem without being over-enthusiastic and slightly patronising or over-critical and grudging. So I'm writing this open letter instead, to congratulate you on your achievement and to set out some of the doubts which are shared by a number of the people who are packing Sadler's Wells. The first thing, certainly, is to welcome you back, after your big success here two years ago. I couldn't help noting then that the success was due more to acrobatic brio and showmanship than to classical purity, that ensemble was often imprecise and technique sloppy. The success was due also to the belief in some quarters that black is always beautiful and the amazement in others that there could be a black ballet company at all.

This time the acrobatics and the showmanship have been toned down, the ensembles are better drilled and the classical technique is much improved, though still not ideal. Balanchine's *Allegro Brillante* (not one of his most inspired ballets) is danced as the Royal Ballet's touring company or New York City Ballet might do it on an off night, which is meant as praise for a company that is only seven years old. Balanchine's *Agon* (an acknowledged masterpiece in his most experimental style) is given with even greater panache and humour than last time, and probably with more than even NYCB could muster. Your own abstract ballets. *Holberg Suite and Fête Noire*, are excellently done, though your choreography is not very distinctive. Several dancers are proving themselves outstanding artists: notably the tall elegant Virginia Johnson, the smaller and extremely versatile Lydia Abarca and the very tall, likeable Mel Tomlinson who was such a sinister and witty fallen angel/serpent in *Manifestations*, your amusing and ingenious modern-style account of the Garden of Eden, which is the biggest new success of the season.

Indeed your company is now quite good enough for us to judge it purely on its technical and artistic merits. I am sure you do not want your dancers praised merely for being black.

After all, there have been black dancers in American ballet for years – you yourself were a star of New York City Ballet – and there were all-black companies before yours, albeit short-lived ones. Indeed, you have said that you want your company to be integrated, mixing black and white dancers, but only when there are sufficient opportunities for black dancers in the other established companies. Personally I think integration raises all sorts of aesthetic and dramatic problems, however desirable it may be socially and politically, but for the moment I'm concerned with your company as it is.

The fact of its being all-black, or to be more accurate many shades of non-white, gives it a stylistic cohesion, just like an all-white company, or an all-Japanese one for that matter. Your dancers have certain characteristics in common which both enhance and detract from their success. Their enormous agility and exuberance, natural joy in movement, and general amiability play a great part in their success. The shape of their bodies is different from what we are accustomed to, which worries some purists, but then present-day English and American dancers have different shapes from the Russians who created the classics. More seriously, I find your dancers' faces inexpressive; this may be because you have trained them too thoroughly in the Balanchine tradition.

On the whole, the difference between a black company and a white one is no greater than the difference between, say, New York City Ballet and the Bolshoi. There is room in ballet for many styles and many sorts of dancers. But I think you are wrong to round off your programmes with folksy works like *Dougla* and *Forces of Rhythm*. Sure, it's great fun to see the dancers letting themselves go, thrusting and shaking in the near-nude to jungle drums or matching folk-steps to Tchaikovsky, classical technique to negro spirituals and jazz. But this kind of success is too easy. It risks smashing the still-fragile image you are carefully building. Instead of falling back on Afro-Asian or Harlem traditions which have been exploited so often in the past, you must find a new ballet or dance-style that is specially your own. The Dance Theatre of Harlem will not be just another goodish ballet company. It will be a great one.

With best wishes, etc,
Oleg Kerensky

Radio

Peter Porter

Knot Likely

Pick of my three weeks' listening was R. D. Laing's sideshow-of-the-air, *Do You Love Me? or Why Did the Peacock Scream?* (Radio 3), but it's been a good time all round for grasping bizarre bits of information, odd aphorisms and wonderful noises from the radio waves. On our magic island, it isn't just sounds which give delight and hurt not that keep dropping round Caliban's ears, but terrible statistics, consoling facts and marvellously irrelevant confrontations too. It pays to be an eavesdropper and rest your eyes from the telly's glare. Only very hale persons, however, or those with no sense of humour are advised to listen to Laing's gallimaufry when it is repeated. One and a quarter hours of the games people play in Frognal – this might be a fair description of the strange concoction which Laing, his composer Carl Davis, and producer Martin Esslin put together.

But you wouldn't get so much fun (or so much insensitivity to people's pain) in orthodox analysis. The idea must have been to set some of our favourite cries for help to music, and let the spaces in between be filled up with recitatives of broken marriages, suicidal self-communings and the simpler cloacal rhymes and assonances. 'It's wipe your bum before you come/And no more masturbating' – sub-Sondheim, perhaps, but memorable. As scene after scene of human unhappiness went past, it became evident that Laing was attempting a sort of exorcism of the poison which has seeped into his system over the years. Sir John Mandeville once travelled in climes so cold that all the words ever spoken there hung undispersed from vantage points such as trees and cliffs. Laing simply introduced Carl Davis to some of the bat-like clingings of his professional life, and turned his own pen to runic incantation.

Unfortunately all the poets of the English language had been there before him. Nor were his forays into family non-communication more freshly recorded. 'What do you want for your birthday?' 'A divorce.' 'It's too expensive.' Or 'Mummy! Mummy!' 'Not tonight, Oedipus.' I can't see comedians' script writers asking for a transcription of this text. But Carl Davis's music was successful, and was usually the only source of wit. 'Take this pill, it helps you not to shout' goes surprisingly well to a solemn hymn tune. Also, 'The Song of the Guru's Wife' had a nice suggestion of Brecht/Weill at their most sententious. I suppose it was all worth doing: certainly it was very well spoken by a heroic team of actors and actresses.

But the show hasn't increased my confidence in anti-establishment psychotherapy. After so many cracker mottoes derived from real misery, I would have welcomed some Ukrainian proverbs of the sort beloved by Khrushchev in his prime. I remembered instead the collection of Icelandic words of wisdom Auden collected in the Thirties and hereby offer two of them to R. D. Laing: they might inspire him to a new programme. They sound strangely like his own gleanings from clinical life – 'Every man likes the smell of his own farts', and 'pissing into his shoe keeps no man warm for long'.

From end-of-term medical revue to tragedy in the criminal courts leads via Radio 4 to *Death of a Child: Maria Colwell.* For once Edgar Lustgarten kept all staginess out of his narrator's linking passages. None was needed, as the appalling story unfolded. But you couldn't say that there was no villain, that the whole thing was an inevitable and unavoidable disaster. There was a plethora of villains, and if the libel laws prevent my naming the individuals, at least I can nominate the Social Welfare Departments of East Sussex and Brighton.

Perhaps the legal niceties passed me by (sometimes I could hardly bear to listen), but it was nowhere made clear why the courts allowed Mrs Keppel (Maria's mother) custody of the child in preference to her foster parents, who loved her, when Mrs Keppel's several previous children were still being fostered out. Much editorial phrasing was unhelpful – such as 'a tug-of-love situation' and Maria's fate remaining

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'under the shadow of the court'. Maria's last months were made a little easier by neighbours, who testified to her condition: 'Like holding a bird in one's hand and frightened of holding it too tight, for fear of squeezing the life out of it,' one said. Indignation when there is no chance to help, and, even worse, wisdom after the event, are not appropriate to Maria Colwell's tragedy, but I am grateful to the BBC for making me aware of how the law works in the lives of fostered children. 'Sooner or later,' the narration said, 'the mother's application for custody would be successful, and the court thought it might be better if it were sooner.' The later the better could have saved Maria's life.

Two more notable sounds and sayings – all Radio 3. The poems from *Finnegans Wake* have been filling the air with their puns late at night. Denis McCarthy's reading of 'The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly' was as beautifully thick as the Liffey itself. This is surely one of the most invigorating poems in the language, and Terence Tiller's annotation of it was both light-hearted and thorough. Then there was the chance to cull from an excellent programme about Horace Walpole's reaction to the American Rebellion, *The View from Strawberry Hill.* As England's fortunes declined, Walpole suggested patriotically that 'if the Americans provoke us, we shall sail out in our Bucentaur and cuckold them with their spouse, the Atlantic'.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Stir Quality

I don't know why prisoners are released from jail so early in the morning – to hide their shame, to allow them just enough time to pull a quick job before breakfast? – but that does seem to be the rule. In movies, of course, there is always a sleek limousine purring just across the road and the demobbed offender is instantly whisked off to headquarters, or to where the loot was stashed, or to his doom. In real life, things are more likely to be as represented by last week's episode of *Inside Story* (BBC-2): the gates close behind a shuffling malcontent bound for the dole queue, the probation officer and – if he gets a break – his own cubicle in some downtown YMCA.

Or, if he *really* gets a break, he is met by a television crew, who wish to inquire of him why he has not been met ('Don't you have any friends?') and who are prepared to accompany him throughout the ensuing friendless weeks as he toils to reconstruct himself. Charles Smith was the subject of *Inside Story*'s study of what happens to a jailbird when he genuinely makes the effort to go straight, and in lots of ways he was an ideal choice: confirmed enough in villainy to have spent about a third of his life inside and yet quite convincing in his newfound aspirations. Also, his ambitions were 'creative' rather than self-abasing. The creativity had come upon him, bizarrely enough, as a result of reading Cyril Connolly's *The Unquiet Grave* ('It opened a whole new fucking world. It was like a bomb going off in my head. It nearly killed me, that book'). In a flash, it seems – and Cyril might not have liked this bit – he had decided to devote his life to commercial design.

So the cameras followed him as he made his first overtures to the ad world, filming things 'as they happened'. He would emerge, hang-dog, from an agency and a disembodied voice would ask him how things went; now and again, the same voice would wonder if the presence of cameras did not induce a certain unreality into his transactions. Smith admitted that it did, but no one pressed him to concede that he might not have got his interviews in the first place if the telly hadn't paved the way. Still, some of his encounters were strong enough for even us to forget that they were being filmed. There was many a ripe smoothie to fob him off with fake encouragement ('Right. Lovely. Okay. New ideas are always welcome. Why don't you go away and . . .?'), and as the rebuffs mounted, Smith's own at first humble demeanour began to show interesting cracks. Some promising early flashes of paranoia gradually got more resplendent and it became clear that if breaking into advertising were to prove so much more difficult than breaking into houses, Charles was quickly going to lose interest. One ad man suggested enragingly that he might put in a spell at art school, another thought he might be able to fix him up with a bit of teaching on the side, while a third (and significantly this was the one who really sent Charles over the edge) gave him a small commission and then expressed mild disappointment in the samples Smith turned in. Soon he was ranting: 'I'm going to change the ad world. They think they can keep me out. But I'm going to attack them all the more savagely and take them all prisoners.' Judging from what we were shown of his designs, he'd had an unusual number of doors opened to him, so such an outburst could not be mistaken for healthily creative grit. Nor could the ex-felon's closing threat: 'If you won't let me design, I'll steal again, and this time I'll steal *in bulk*.'

Few viewers, by the end, would have put much money on Smith's chances of staying out of stir. Was this what we were meant to think? Was he picked because enough was known of his personality for it to be predicted that he'd find it hard to sustain discouragement? Are old lags so beaten down that there's no point in them harbouring other than negative ambitions (the ambition merely to go straight)? *Inside Story*'s poker-faced approach left many such questions hanging in the air; it also left one wondering about the unobtrusively intrusive skills that enticed Smith to let so much of his instability show through.

Also produced by Roger Mills is the series *Sailor* (BBC-1), which – from the episode I've seen – struck me as little more than a classy recruitment job. Last week's spent a lot of its time showing us pilots learning to land their planes on an aircraft carrier and it needed only a Pathe News voice-over to have them landing on a sixpence. Similarly, with the chummy sequences in the officers' mess, and the humane disciplining of a matelot who'd gone AWOL (he was fined £10 and given seven days of No 9; Players No 9, presumably): it all seemed to be saying, come and join us. Well, no thanks. But it must be said that the photography (by Patrick Turley) was very fine throughout.

'My wife's running it in for me. She's run it into the wall, the gatepost and Mr Thursby's milkfloat'; 'This chap had a fight with a chap in Golders Green. He's in hospital now with suspected rabbis'; 'If you pour Domestos on a Catholic, you could be had up for bleach of the priest.' It's just as well that 'quick-fire, *Laugh-In* type humour' is being touted as the hallmark of Thames's new *What's On Next;* the trick is to treat the last line of joke-one as the first line of joke-two, and so on through the show – with luck, the idea is, zany surrealism will result.

Weekend Competition

No 2426 **Set by Little Keith**

I have a dream of a great, unwritten poem, a poem of up to 12 lines which would scan, make sense and perhaps even rhyme. No sweat? Ah, but each line would *already* be a great line, familiar to even the sleepiest browser of Palgrave. See what you can do by 3 September.

Result of No 2423 **Set by B. J. Tickle**

Competitors were asked to devise homophonic couplets – couplets in which the lines, when spoken rapidly, would sound interchangeable.

Report **by Spiro Keats**

Martin Fagg, whom I sometimes regard as my favourite living author, has not entered for two weeks. It happens every year, I know – he's off blueing his comp-hoard somewhere – but I'm annually tempted to place, at the foot of this column, a note reading:

Martin Fagg is on holiday.

He doesn't win every week, whatever you may think (it's just that many of our competitors have pseudo-sounding nyms: Pascoe Polglaze and Anu Maverick, for instance, are real people); but whenever we have a verse comp, which is most weeks, I do sorely miss the inimitable swing, the sheer élan, of Mr Fagg's concoctions. (I partially except Shakespearian comps, where of course the great Parrott holds undisputed sway.) Now, now – you're all very good too. £1.50 per couplet.

(Being a review of Nora Beloff's *The General Says No*)

You're a pig, Norah.
Europe, ignore her!

And how chic a logic'll suit you Asians
In harsh ecological situations?

Agree, my dear, we can never believe in the currency, knowing what we do;
A grim idea – we can never be leaving the current scene, owing what we do.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A cheery nude'll light her sweetheart's eyes;
At sheer renewed delight her sweet heart sighs,
Then love is splendid, sweeter none can find
Than lovers blended, sweet and unconfined.
CONNAIRE KENSIT

Sin in Isle of Mull! bald, aching whores,
for dimes,
Singing 'I love Moll', balled a king's horse
four times.
T. GRIFFITHS

Hamlet is bred for kingship, but he's now
a corse:
Ham, lettuce, bread for kin; chip butties
our course.

Odysseus homeward, right off course, suggests
Odd issues Homer'd write of – causes jests.
MAY DAY

Though sex-pert Esta mates with all, financial
keepers indicate a fall,
Those expert estimates withal, fine Anne shall
keep hers in dick-hate of all.

Social policies are thus for examining morality
in the new dumb-teen times,
So shall Polly seize Arthur's for eggs, ham,
and immorality in the nude, umpteen times.
GERRY HAMILL

'Let us be true, Tom, let's!' I scream
and whine.
Lettuce, beetroot, omelettes, ice-cream and wine
JAMES MICHIE

(Winchester *v.* the M3: Two Views)
There is a beleaguered offensive ahead.
The risible, eager defence of a Head.
NICK ENRIGHT

'I've an idea that's the Countess of Ayr.'
'Ivan, hide here. That's the County Surveyor.'
V. R. ORMEROD

(Eskimo Nell)
Hello, Alaskan uterus.
Hell! Oh, a lass can neuter us.
JOHN WARDROPER

R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z:
Arrest Thieu! Fee double, you ex wise-head!
TIM HOPKINS

Pouring publican's tough-nut tale,
Boring bubbly-can stuff's not ale!
ANDREW PAUL

It's a gay Shah? Girl Eskimo? No,
It's a Geisha Girl, less kimono.
A. J. WYBORN

A limp ecstasy
Olympics to see.
SHOLOM KASS

Tortuous, ornate, your burden be.
Taught you us? Or nature, bird and bee?
JONATHAN SLEIGH

Her infantrymen do sleep drowned in cider,
Her infant tremendous leaped round inside her.
G. WRIGHT

Ah, dark territorial orphan – die, wrecked
disheartened NHS! I'll swear
Our doctor, a Tory, 'll off and direct his art
and energies elsewhere!
GINA BERKELEY

Assiac

Chess Board

No 1395 **To Swap or Not to Swap**

That is the question requiring the right answer. In Panno-Ljubojevic, Petropolis 1973 the answer was faulty and the result instant death. / 16 / 7k / 4q1pp / 3p4 / 4kt1P1 / PP3B1K/4Q3/.

White had to avoid swapping Queens and best might have been Be3:, followed by Qf1. Instead he blundered **1) Kg1??** and after . . .Qe4 the sequel **2) Be3:,Qe3:†** forced the Q-swap. White resigned on account of the hopeless Pending.

I took this from yet another excerpt in *Schach-Echo* of the interesting research done by Alex Angos in Milwaukee into endings with Queens, pawns and one minor piece. Now here (Polugaievski-Nei, USSR Championship 1963) is a position in which Black erroneously went for the Q-swap./7k/5p2/3q3b/2p1pP2/p1P1P3/P4K1p/7P/4Kt1Q1/.

Black could almost certainly have won by **1)** . . . **Qd2** with the unpleasant threat of . . .Qf4††; but he reasoned that after the Q-swap his B would conquer Pa3 which even at the cost of his h-pawn would give him a won ending; what he overlooked was that his a-pawn could get lost too. What happened was **1) . . . Qd1††?; 2) Kg3,Bd2; 3) Ktf3,Bf4†; 4) Kg4,Qg1:†?** To avoid the swap would still give Black the better chances; **5) Ktg1:,Bc1** (. . . Bh2: wouldn't achieve more than a draw either); **6) Kte2,Bb2!** Far better than . . . Ba3: allowing 7) Ktc3 & 8) Kta4: with much the better for White. As it is Black's threat of . . . Ba3: hamstrings the Kt; **7) Kh3:,Kg7; 8) Kg4,Kh6; ½-½.**

Now here (Tal-Suetin 1973) is a case of miscalculated Q-swap./8/1p3qpk/p1pQ3p/2P1P2P/1P4P1/4Kt3/b3K3/8/.

Black merely wanted to swap his B for the Kt hoping then to send his Q foraging in the enemy camp; but after **1) . . . Bc4††?; 2) Ktc4:,Qc4:, Qc4:†; 3) Qd3†** he was shocked to realise the overlooked check forcing Q-swap and resigned the hopeless ending forthwith.

Finally (Tylor-Lasker Nottingham 1936) a position in which the Q-swap doesn't actually happen, the mere threat allowing Black to win a subtle ending. / 8 / ppbq1k2 / 2p2pp1 / 7p / 2PPQ3/1P3Kt2/1P4PP/7K/.

1) . . . Qe6; 2) Qd3 In case of a swap, of course, Black simply marches his K to e4, chases the Kt by the g-pawn, and White could do nothing against it, **Bf4; 3) g3,Qe3!** In case of swap the great Emanuel would gobble up Pb2; **4) Qc3,Bh6; 5) c5,Qf2; 6) Qc4†,Kg7; 7) Qd3,Be3!; 8) Qd1,a5!** Zugzwang!; **9) b4,ab:; 10) b3,Kh6!;** Zugzwang again and White resigned.

The 4-pointer for beginners is a game position. Looks drawish, and to simplify Black went in for some swapping by 1) . . .Re4??; the sequel being 2) g3??,Rf4: 3) Rf4:,Qc5 with a draw to follow. Why all those question marks? What had they overlooked? For 6 ladder-points **B** is a win, neatly achieved in four moves. Very helpful hint: underpromotion! **C** (for 7) a win too, dedicated to Karl Junker, the distinguished study editor of *Schach-Echo*. Usual prizes, entries by 31 August.

A: Hartoch-Kramer, 1969: /8/2q2pk1/1p2r3/p6p/P1Kt2R2/1P3R1P/2P3PK/8/.

B: V. & M. Platov 1906 : /16/7B/2P5/1p4p1/3k4/7K/4b3/.

C: R. Fedorovitch & E. Sorokin 1976 : /16/4pp2/8/3k4/8/p3PP1P/K7/.

Report on No 1392 *Set 30 July*

A: 1) Be6:??,Bh2:†!; 2) Kth2:,Qf2:!!†; 3) Kf2:, fe:†, and the check allows him to retake the Q with a satisfactory balance sheet.

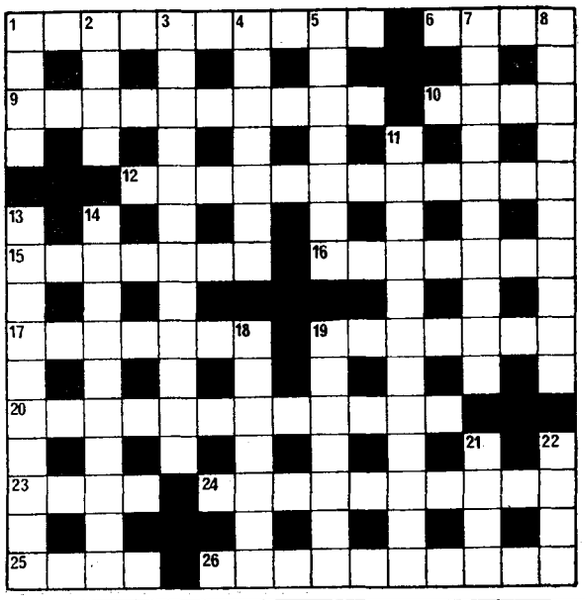
B: 1) Ktg6,g3; 2) Kth4,e4!; 3) Ktg2,e3 (Now the g-pawn won't queen with a check); **4) Ktf4!,g2; 5) Ktd5(e6),g1=Q; 6) Ktc7††.**

C: 1) d3†!,Kd5! (Not . . .Kc3 allowing Bh6 with the check threat); **2) Ktf6†,Ke5!; 3) Ktd7†,Kd5; 4) Ktb6†,Ke5; 5) Bh6,Kf6; 6) Bd2!,a1=Q; 7) Bc3†, Qc3:; 8) Ktd5†,** etc.

Prizes: D. E. Cohen, S. N. Collings, W. Haverkamp (one of the German solvers), P. Hodgson, J. T. Naylor.

Weekend Crossword 1178

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1178, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 31 August.



ACROSS

1. Expect one to appear before the head after a caper (10).
6. It takes a penny paper to be tedious (4).
9. Upset or ventured to be scattered (10).
10. The knight without had a party (4).
12. Badger about going straight ahead in book (8,4).
15. Feeling which transforms me into nothing (7).
16. Communication which may make it sleep (7).
17. Old actress about to pay a visit nearby (7).
19. For a gold coin I act in an actor's embrace (7).
20. Bird after something to drink reverses rule about gait being unsteady (5,7).
23. Hot tune for a musical (4).
24. Hurry and clean untidiness for a relative (5,5).
25. Appointment as the mark of victory (4).
26. Writer of 2 Kings (6,4).

DOWN

1. Mad but I'm all right (4).
2. Actor who puts one in the shade? (4).
3. Creatures provide food and things for support (12).
4. If godless the model would make the artist leave (7).
5. Means of support for wandering settler (7).
7. Study the chance of choosing a fresh takeover (10).
8. Man with a saving talent (10).
11. As much as ever ruined without his and mine being ruined (12).
13. Academic job for a mate on sea-going vessel (10).
14. Teacher falls for holiday outings (5,5).
18. Told a story about the East and expressed longing (7).
19. She told such Dreadful Lies (7).
21. The composer comes in to hear new compositions (4).
22. Philosopher who is always right (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1176

T	I	T	T	E	R	S	■	P	R	E	M	I	U	M
H	■	R	■	L	■	A	■	R	■	L	■	D	■	O
I	R	E	N	E	■	V	I	O	L	I	N	I	S	T
E	■	A	■	C	■	E	■	P	■	C	■	O	■	H
V	A	C	A	T	E	■	B	E	L	I	T	T	L	E
E	■	H	■	O	■	M	■	R	■	T	■	■	■	R
S	T	E	E	R	F	O	R	T	H	■	I	B	I	S
■	■	R	■	S	■	T	■	I	■	A	■	■	■	■
M	A	Y	O	■	S	H	O	U	L	D	E	R	E	D
A	■	■	D	E	S	■	V	■	R	■	E	■	■	■
R	E	S	C	U	E	R	S	■	P	O	D	I	U	M
C	■	E	■	N	■	W	■	S	■	W	■	S	■	A
H	E	R	A	C	L	E	A	N	■	S	A	T	A	N
E	■	I	■	E	■	L	■	O	■	O	■	E	■	D
R	E	F	U	S	A	L	■	B	E	N	A	R	E	S

Prizewinners to No 1176

S. J. Turney (London N1)
Urjo Kareda (Ontario)
Mrs C. Orchard (Coed-y-Paen)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

APPOINTMENTS

STELLA FISHER BUREAU – next week or as long as you like. Contented temps. Shorthand/audio/copy/clerical/switchboard. All skills well paid and well received throughout London. Stella Fisher Bureau, 110 Strand, WC2. 01-836 6644.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

for small social science research unit. The job requires administrative ability and willingness to take responsibility but also routine secretarial skills including humdrum ones. For further information:

The Director, Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research, 158 North Gower Street, London NW1 2ND.

VACANCY FOR TEACHER in a residential Rudolf Steiner School for mentally handicapped children. Apply: Principal, Sunfield Children's Homes, Clent Grove, Clent, Stourbridge, West Midlands. Tel.: Hagley 2253.

'THE MOST EXCITING COMMUNITY Arts Project in Europe' (Council of Europe Report) Programme Director of Inter-Action is looking for a shorthand secretary interested in social change to join this challenging group. We live and work co-operatively; the hours are long for little financial reward. If you could make this job a success for yourself and the Director, contact: Maggi Lilienfeld, 14 Talacre Road, NW5. Tel. (01) 267 1422.

ACTION RESEARCH. New centre wants intelligent creative person to assess needs and capabilities and explore work possibilities for Camden unemployed. Salary according to experience. Box 5002.

BUSY AUTHORS' AGENCY Marylebone req. experienced Shorthand Typist/Secretary. Varied work. No Agencies. Tel. 935 8589.

COLLEGE LEAVER SECRETARY, poor shorthand, good education, for Academics. By end August. Stella Fisher Bureau, 110 Strand, WC2. 836 6644.

AU-PAIRS, domestics, hotel staff. Spain and EEC. S.a.e. Alpha Ltd, Armadale, Howwood, Renfrewshire.

COLLEGE LEAVER Secretaries preferring Social Services, Charities and The Arts in general will prefer to find their first post through the College Leaver Specialists at Covent Garden Bureau, 53 Fleet Street, London EC4. 01-353 7696.

MEDICAL SECRETARIES and receptionists urgently required for doctors and hospitals, perm. and temp. M. & S. Agency, 124 Gloucester Road. SW7. 373 7185.

TEMPORARY SECRETARIAL WORK through Covent Garden Bureau, offers the best scope to the London Secretary/Typist. Join us now for the summer. Covent Garden Bureau, 53 Fleet Street, EC4. 01-353 7696.

TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp Fenwick's). 493 3005.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

requires a **SECRETARY** of **UNA INTERNATIONAL SERVICE** to administer its programmes of long-term volunteer work in rural development and change in Africa and Latin America. Responsibilities include external relations, policy development and some fund-negotiation.

UNAIS also requires a Programme Officer to liaise with overseas representatives on project selection, and to recruit, select and train qualified volunteers.

Both posts require administrative ability, knowledge of voluntary agencies, community and rural development; the two successful candidates will, between them, have experience of Africa, particularly francophone states, and Latin America. Further details from **Miss Audrey Davies, UNA, 93 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TX** (s.a.e.). Completed applications should be returned by 6 September.

Employment Opportunities

Occupational Therapist
Speech Therapist
Audiologist

Applications are now being accepted for the above positions with a 250-bed regional referral centre in Grand Falls, Newfoundland.

Applications must be in writing and will be treated in strict confidence. Please include qualifications, experience and personal data.

This scenic area has excellent educational and recreational facilities.

Applications with curriculum vitae, must be forwarded to:

Personnel Officer, Central Newfoundland Hospital, Union Street, Grand Falls, Newfoundland, Canada A2A 2E1

London Borough of

Bromley

Social Services Department

Social Workers

Salary £2,529 - £3,282/3,702 + £312 Supplement + £285 L.W.

To work in an area team providing a generic service with opportunities for individuals to specialise in some aspects of social work. Professional support is given by regular supervision/consultation and there are opportunities for student supervision. In-service training and staff development is available and the needs of staff are considered important. Ref. P 184. Closing date 3 September.

Application forms from the Assistant Chief Executive (Manpower), Town Hall, Bromley BR1 1SB. Tel: 01-464 3333 ext. 3318.

EDITOR

The New Internationalist requires a journalist experienced in magazines to work as an editor. The magazine, with a worldwide circulation of 17,000 examines the connections and the conflicts between the rich countries and the poor.

A knowledge of the 'development' field is essential, as well as the willingness to work irregular hours when necessary. He or she will be expected to live in the Oxfordshire area. Salary not large but paid according to basic family needs.

Applications, giving details of experience and examples of work, should be sent to: **Noreen Smith, New Internationalist, 62A High Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0EE.**
Telephone (0491) 37800.

NEW Internationalist

Appointments Wanted

GIRL SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE, 22, seeks varied challenging job. London/S. Bucks. Offers? Mary Crail, Ivanhoe House, Oxford Road, Stokenchurch, Bucks.

MALE, 36, experienced Personnel & Industrial Relations, formerly trade union secretary, seeks challenging worthwhile employment. Excellent refs avail. Box 4977.

Fellowship

CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIP

Applications are invited for a 1 year Arts Council Fellowship, based in the expanding new City of Milton Keynes at a salary of £3,500, plus expenses.

As well as continuing his/her own work the Fellow will be expected to establish writers workshops, assist individual writers, and actively help the development of alternative and community newspapers.

The Fellow will be a successful creative writer, preferably with experience of journalism, who is also able to develop these talents in others.

An advisory group is being set up to support the Fellowship.

For further details, write to or telephone Nick Waterlow or Roger Kitchen, Milton Keynes Development Corporation, Wavendon Tower, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, MK17 8LX, or telephone Milton Keynes 74000.

Closing date for applications is Thursday 30 September.

School

THE NEW SCHOOL, King's Langley, based on the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. This method of education aims at unfolding individual faculties and the development of truly social impulses. Co-educational Boarding and Day School. 5-18 years. GCE at 'O' and 'A' levels. Prospectus on application. King's Langley 62505.

Restaurant

T. A. LAYTON WINE BAR. 12 Esterbrooke Street (off Vincent Square), SW1. 828 5211.

Accommodation Vacant

3RD PERSON wanted (male) to share pleas. flat quiet road Hampstead. Own 2 rms. £75 p.m. incl. c.h. etc. 794 6833 aft. 6 p.m.

HORNSEY N8. Easy reach Finsbury Park tube. Attractive bed-sitter, separate kitchen in pleasant family house. £50 per month inc. heating etc. to woman non-smoker. 340 6401. Ring Sunday p.m. onwards.

CONGENIAL ATMOSPHERE, Hampstead. Lge sgle b/s. for wkg m. grad. £10. Ring 435 8109.

N10. Small room equipped for b.& b. only. £7 p.w. incl. c.h. Box 4999.

TWO GIRLS, mid-20s, wanted to share SE24 house run co-operatively. £6.75 each. per week, own rooms. Tel: 674 6463.

SURBITON: 16 mins Waterloo, mod. townhouse, 3 bdrms, 1½ baths, c.h. From Sept. £42. Yews. Rookery, Leatherhead. 72619.

VISITING ACADEMICS. We have a large selection of flats & houses within easy reach of the British Museum & London University. Helen Watson & Co. 636 5538.

TO LET AYRSHIRE Oct. '76-July '77, detached country cottage set in 1 acre. Furn. 4 beds, 2 public rms, all mod. cons, c.h. 12 miles Ayr. Refs. £75 p.c.m. North Barrule, Rankinston, Ayr. Rankinston 230.

Distressed by hotel prices in London?

The Sloane Club, whose origins go back to 1922, is now able to accept a limited number of applications for membership.

Members are provided with a bedroom and Continental breakfast for £6.48. Lunch and Dinner: £1.75.

In addition The Sloane Room, Bar, Library, quiet rooms and 24 hours porterage are all that you would expect from a London club.

Details of membership for both Ladies and Gentlemen can be obtained by writing to the Club Secretary, quoting reference: NS2

The Sloane Club

52 Lower Sloane Street, London SW1W 8BS

Accommodation Wanted

YOUNG PAINTER needs living accom. 2 rooms, preferably within 6 miles of Central London. Tel. 0442 55963.

FOUR RESPONSIBLE young people seek house/flat Twickenham or near, late Sept. £40 p.w. max. Ring Knipton 289, Nick.

RESEARCHER, Amnesty, seeks 2/3 bdrm flat in Camden, pref. Bloomsbury. 242 7546.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT, fem., requires furn. room in pleasant house/flat from Oct. 76, convenient London Univ. P. Wentz, Sallstr. 39, 3000 Hannover, W. Germany.

HELEN WATSON & CO. require flats for visiting academics. 637 4863.

Property

SOUTH COAST: Craftsman's Victorian cottage + very small orchard, £12,000. Damp course, gas c.h., insulation etc. Box 4992.

Removals

TAXIMOVES FOR 1 & 2 TON VANS, all with helpful working drivers. 722 7661.

Publications

WORDS ET CETERA. The secondhand and rare bookshop devoted entirely to literature. Open: Sat. Sun., Tues., 2-6 p.m. Wed., Thurs., Fri., 2-11 p.m. From 30 Sept. Poetry Readings every Thurs. at 8 p.m. 89 Theberton St. N1.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

BOOKS. Order by post and charge to your Barclaycard/Access account. Any book in print obtained UK/US. State author, title, publisher (if known). The Lime Tree Bower Press, 46 Brookfield, Highgate West Hill, London N6 6AT.

REVIEW COPIES. We are large buyers of review copies and of collections of books in fine condition on all subjects, including quality paper-backs. R. A. Boon, Booksellers, 348 Upper St, N1. 01-359 1196. Open daily incl. Sat. 9.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.

SECONDHAND Fiction and Biography, also new books at reduced prices, all at World of Books, 30 Sackville Street, London W1.

LIBRARIES BOUGHT. Hammersmith Books, Barnes High St. London SW13. 01-876 7254.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW STATESMAN
Vol. 92. No. 2370

Contents

226 **Christopher Hitchens:** Spotlight on Politics
227 **Alexander Cockburn:** Kansas City Blues
228 **Bruce Palling:** Rhodesia Waits for the Crunch
229 **Michael Holroyd:** The Author as Victim
230 **David Leitch:** August is a Wicked Month
231 **Matthew Blair:** The Spectre of Trotsky
232 **Glyn Jones:** The Open-Door University
235 **Donald Gould:** The Psychiatrist as Cinderella
236 **Bernard Croft:** Suitable Apparel
237 **Kingsley Amis:** Words and Meanings
238 **A. J. P. Taylor:** London Diary
239 **Bel Mooney:** Familiar Figures – 3
240 **Arthur Marshall:** First Person
240 **Roger Woddis:** Post Mortem
241 **Letters to the Editor**

Books and Arts

243 **Wilfred Beckerman:** The Economics of Happiness
244 **Lorna Sage:** Ann Cornelisen's Italy

Other reviews by Mervyn Jones, John Raymond, Frank Kermode, Vieda Skultans, Corinna Adam, Julian Barnes

250 **John Coleman:** Films
251 **Craig Raine:** Theatre
252 **Oleg Kerensky:** Ballet
252 **Peter Porter:** Radio
253 **Ian Hamilton:** Television
253 **Weekend Competition**
254 **Chess and Crossword**

Poems by Christopher Reid and Alan Brownjohn

Exhibitions

HENRY MOORE'S Sketchbook 1926 facsimile edition and Stonehenge lithographs at Ganymed Gallery, 11 Great Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836.

THOMAS GIBSON FINE ART, 9a New Bond St., W1. 499 8572. Weekdays 10-5. Six American Photographers 19 July-31 August.

Theatres

CHICHESTER. 0243 86333. 19, 28 Aug. at 2.0, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27 Aug. at 7.0 'Monsieur Perrichon's Travels'; 19, 24, 28 Aug. at 7.0, 21, 26 Aug. at 2.0 'The Circle'.

LYTTLELTON (New National Theatre) 928 2252. Frl. & Thurs. at 7.45 Sat. 2.30 and 7.45 'Weapons of Happiness' by Howard Brenton. Mon. & Tues. at 7.45, Wed. 2.30 & 7.45 'Blithe Spirit'. Over 100 excellent £1 seats on sale day of performance.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Evgs at 9. Sats 6.30 and 9.0. 'T. Zee' a new musical by Richard O'Brien.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. Hubert Gregg in Terence Rattigan's 'While the Sun Shines'.

UNITY THEATRE: 1 Goldington Cres. Office open Mon. & Wed. 10-1. Tel. 387 8647.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334
'Worth queuing for from breakfast time' Financial Times.
TOM STOPPARD'S DIRTY LINEN
Mon. - Thurs. at 8.30, Fri. & Sat. 7.00 & 9.15.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

70p per line (average 6 words; minimum 2 lines) Box No 50p
Trade in Personal £1.00 Display, centimetre £4.00
Send copy to arrive Tuesday a.m. or telephone 01-405 8471
NEW STATESMAN, GREAT TURNSTILE, LONDON WC1V 7HJ

Meetings

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Martin Ince of the Socialist Environmental and Research Association, on 'Alternative Technology', 25 Aug. 7.30 p.m. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. Collection, all welcome.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 21 Aug. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. All welcome.

KRISHNAMURTI, the well-known revolutionary religious speaker and educator, will be holding public talks and discussion meetings at Brockwood Park Educational Centre, Bramdean, Nr Alresford, Hants, at 11 a.m. on 28, 29, 31 August and 2, 4 and 5 September. No tickets needed. For details of train and coach arrangements from London please telephone Bramdean 228.

THEOSOPHY, S.a.e. for free pamphlets, booklist, programme of talks, September. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

Courses

BRITISH BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION. New short courses. 01-242 5538 (office hours).

DEGREE, GCE and Professional courses in the comfort of your own home by qualified tutors from Wolsey Hall, the Oxford correspondence college (founded 1894) and Accredited by CACC. Free prospectus from W. M. M. Milligan MBE, TD, MA, Dept BG1, Wolsey Hall, Oxford, OX2 6PR, or telephone 0865-54231.

THE ECONOMICS BEHIND POLITICS

The understanding of the economic principles behind the political issues of the day requires not so much an assimilation of a mass of facts, but rather a way of thinking analytically.

Our non-academic lecture/discussion course is designed to train you to think in this way for yourself — to enable you to become your own economist.

No previous knowledge necessary. Attend one evening per week — either Tuesday or Thursday.

Next term begins 7 p.m., September 21 and 23. Fee for 12-week course £5, all materials supplied. Courses also available by correspondence.

Write or phone for prospectus:
Economic and Social Science Research Association,
177 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London SW1 (Near Victoria Station) Tel: 01-834 4979.

Secretarial

RAINBOW OFFICE SERVICES for efficient typing and duplicating. Collection and delivery by arrangement. Phone 460 3430.

QUALITY typing, English, German, French. Moderate charges. Anne Shotts, 452 6617.

IBM TYPEWRITING, DUPLICATING and Xeroxing, also transcribing from Grundig tapes & Philips 86 cassettes. Scotts, 80 Queensway, London W2, 01-727 5828.

FAST, EFFICIENT, TYPING SERVICE on IBM. Telephone 352 6327.

PETER COXSON Academic and Literary Typing. 876 5306; 584 0198.

GROUP *of postgraduates will arrange to* have your editing, proof-reading, indexing, typing etc. done expertly. Phone 727 5289.

Holidays

TUSCAN FARMHOUSE

beautiful position, sleeps 8, maid, available September onwards.

Write Express: Dreydel, La Ripa, Pergo, 52040 Montanare di Cortona, (Arezzo), Italy, or telephone Oxford 52031 (office hours).

LANZAROTE
CANARY ISLANDS
For Winter Sunshine

Luxury villas with private pools or inexpensive apartments. Beach side Taverna in unsophisticated fishing village. All inclusive air holidays from Gatwick.
Details from: Lanzarote Villas, Oastside, Cudham, Sevenoaks, Kent. Tel. Biggin Hill 73528. (ATOL 803 B).

WELSH HILLS. *Superb sit. all comforts.* D. b. & b. £24 ea.p.w. Bonner, Bron Fadog. Trefriw LL27 0QA. Llanrwst 640566.

HOLIDAY FLATS to let, fully furnished. Suit two or three people. Matlock area. £20 per week. Matlock 2732.

PATMOS. The Greek Island nobody knows. Inclusive holiday at splendid Taverna on its own beach. £98. 01-874 2793 (evgs.).

COTSWOLD COTTAGE, *between Oxford &* Cheltenham. Fully modernised, lounge, kit./diner, 3 beds, garage, gdn. Available mid Aug. Tel. Oxford 52031 (office hours).

Financial

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES. £50–£20,000. Regional Trust Ltd, 8 Clifford St. New Bond St. London W1. 01-734 5983 or 2914.

Personal

TUSCANY: traditional houses in beautiful mountain villages. £5,000-£12,000. Qualified family could oversee necessary conversion. Iacopucci, Via dei Francesi 19, 55026 Bagni di Lucca Fornoli, Italy.

ANNE JENNINGS please phone Barry Donlon. Tel. 01-267 1170.

GRADUATE (male), qualified social worker seeks action. Anything stimulating considered. Box 4937.

VISION CORRECTED. Sight improved *without glasses. Qualified Bates practitioner,* Michael Ronan, 39 Smith Street, London SW3. 935 9847.

SLEEP – GLORIOUS SLEEP with Klfa Ear Plugs 75p pkt incl. p & p. Svedmed. 15 *Church St. Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8DE.*

ISRAEL KIBBUTZ schemes. For details send s.a.e. to Project 67 (NS), 21 Little Russell Street, WC1. Tel. 01-242 3506.

COMMUNITY – The New University For The Person: Life-Energy, Progressive Psychotherapy, Education, Gestalt, Regression, Bioenergetics. Write or phone for new programme. Community, 15 Highbury Grange, London N5. Tel: 01-359 1372.

PHILIP HUMPHREYS, PSYCHOLOGIST. Formerly of Princes Gate. Now at Richmond. Phone 940 4416.

MONEY FANATICS SOLVE INFLATION problems, build up capital, saving 30p daily with tax relief. For financial advice ring 01-405 6394.

CO-COUNSELLING: Lady wishes join/form co-counselling group, 40-60 age. London. Box 4984.

BODYMIND METHODS *(Primal, Bioenergetic,* Gestalt, Meditation, Reciport (reciprocal non-professional support)) can be integrated. To find out how, inquire Reciport. 10 Steeles Mews South, NW3.

PSYCHOTHERAPY? Come to AGIP for individual or group sessions. Write to the Secretary, 29 St Mark's Crescent, NW1.

INTERIOR DESIGNER seeks friendship/romance with lady, any nationality. Please write Box 4873.

WOMAN, 42, seeks male for companionship, because she is a woman. Surely there must be more to this life, than mortgage repay*ments and rising damp? SE Essex. Box 4986.*

ARE YOU a fun-loving but serious, attractive, highly intelligent, sane and sensitive man (35-50), divorced/separated, who would enjoy the company of a congenial and compatible female academic in London? Write Box 4825.

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE, 30s, separated, who enjoys reading, music, entertaining, would like to *meet successful man,* 40s, separated/divorced or widower for happy stimulating friendship. London/Surrey. Write Box 4969.

GLASGOW AREA. Business gentleman (44), *moderate means* and very presentable appearance, with general interests (keen musician), would like to meet attractive, intelligent female, 30s, with a view to a permanent relationship. Please write, you will receive a definite reply. Box 4968.

AMUSING PROF. MAN, London, 49, tall, sks similar of opposite sex, pref. like him comfortably off (e.g. because of career) thus avoidirg financial imbalance; radical but democratic; non-smoker; dynamic. Box 4967.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, mid-40s, div., unattached, seeks male companion outings, holidays. Possible permanent relationship. *London area. Box 4958.*

IT SEEMS TERRIBLY UNLIKELY that we shall meet any other way, so please, if you are a man coping on your own with a young family but would like some help (odd days, evenings, weekends, holidays?) and perhaps also the company of a home- and children-loving woman (35), will you let me know? Box 4922.

TALL, rugged intellectual, 40s, SW Lon., Oxford grad., steady prof. income despite poetic nature, seeks fairly sophisticated f., c. 25-42 for close relationship maybe developing towards permanency. Box 5026.

GRADUATE ENGINEER, bachelor, 42, RC, 5ft. 6½in., seeks attractive, feminine, single girl, younger than 33, with view to marriage. Box 5001.

BACHELOR (42), interested arts, reading, music, sailing, pubs, good food & wine, mountains & sea. Has own house & yacht, seeks lady under 35 to share these interests. North West England. Box 4838.

UNIVERSITY LECTURER, 37, *pleasant per*sonality, interested arts, politics, food, seeks attractive female 20s-30s with similar interests. Box 4855.

GRAD. M., 39, wishes to meet non-smoking, music-loving woman, London. Box 4993.

AWARE, PROVINCIAL, intelligent, tall, Englishman, 60, liberated but not free, seeks company of educated, lonely, widow 40/50, for occasional outings London theatres and restaurants. Possibly sharing expenses. Box 5017.

GOOD COMPANY could be escape to happiness. Is there such a thing for small *slim lady, 40s, travelled, considered very* attractive & amusing? Her type is worldly, extrovert, of sincere disposition, not over 55, London based or near. Box 5012.

SRN, 40 (D), needs intelligent m. to share caring relationship. B'ham area. Box 5016.

A FLASK OF WINE, A BOOK OF VERSE, and no one to share 'em? Well, don't just sit there! Contact 'Status', the premier and reputable intro service for unattached professional people. 'Status', 88 Marylebone High Street, W1. 286 2128 (24 hrs.)

MARRIAGE & ADVICE BUREAU, Katharine Allen (ex-Welfare Officer Ministry of Labour, *War Office, Foreign Office). Personal* introductions. 7 Sedley Pl., W1. 499 2556.

FRIENDSHIP MARRIAGE CENTRE caters for educated people, all ages, nationwide. Est. 10 yrs. Confidential details to: M/C, 74m Amhurst Park, London N16.

JOAN REMICK Marriage and Friendship Bureau. A unique personal service. 155 Knightsbridge, London SW1. 589 7567.

THE LONELINESS PROBLEM *is worse for* better-educated people: there are fewer of us; our standards are higher; contact is more difficult. Send 10p for news of a solution to Talfy c/o Mailroom, 32 Newman St, London W1P 3PE.

UNIQUE SOCIAL CLUB. Make friends with really interesting people. Members include doctors, air hostesses, nurses, etc. Details s.a.e.: N33, Sheringham Avenue, N.14.

HEATHER JENNER—MARRIAGE BUREAU The only Bureau to have representatives throughout the country. Send s.a.e. to Main Office, 124 New Bond Street, London W1. 01-629 9634. Interviews free.

DUREX. Latest Continental, Japanese and American brands at discount prices. Send for details of free dozen offer. Premier, 11/46 Black Lion St, Brighton BN1 1PJ.

CONTRACEPTIVES INTERNATIONAL

72 DUREX Gossamer	£3.75
48 DUREX Unison	£2.40
36 NUFORM/FETHERLITE	£2.50
12 AEGIS Black Geronimo	£1.25
24 GOLD KNIGHT	£1.25
10 DUTCH FUN	£1.80
12 U.S.A. Stimula	£1.75
INTERNATIONAL Selection	£2.50

Warwick Supplies (NES), Commerce House, Water Orton, Birmingham. B46 1RR *Return AD when ordering for* **FREE Samples worth 50p!!**
MARITAL AIDS CATALOGUE 20p

Performing Arts Feature

3 SEPTEMBER

The NS of 3 September will carry a special feature on the performing arts. Besides articles by regular critics Benedict Nightingale and Martin Amis there will be pieces on orchestral concerts, dance, jazz and opera. Contributors include Oleg Kerensky, Ted Greenfield, Russell Davies and Norman Platt.

This is an opportunity for those working in the field of performing arts to advertise their organisation, group or company, or particular performances.

For further information telephone Zara Shine or Laura Berryman on 01-405 8471, ext. 31.

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Printed in England by Eden Fisher (Southend) Ltd. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd. at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ. Second class postage paid at New York NY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED